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## Quarterly Series.

NINETEENTH VOLUME.

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*THE LIFE OF OUR LIFE.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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# THE LIFE OF OUR LIFE.

BY

HENRY JAMES COLERIDGE,

OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.



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*No me mueve, mi Dios, para quererte  
El cielo que me tienes prometido :  
Ni me mueve el infierno tan temido  
Para dexar por esso de ofenderte.*

*Tu me mueves, Señor ; mueveme el verte  
Clavado en essa cruz, y escarnecido ;  
Mueveme el ver tu cuerpo tan herido ;  
Muevenme tus afrentas, y tu muerte.*

*Muevesme al tu amor en tal manera,  
Que aunque no hubiera cielo, yo te amara ;  
Y aunque no hubiera infierno, te temiera.*

*No me tienes que dar porque te quiera ;  
Que aunque quanto espero, no esperára,  
Lo mismo que te quiero, te quisiera.*

(ST. FRANCIS XAVIER.)



## PREFACE.

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### I.

THE two volumes now before the reader are founded on the Latin Harmony of the Gospels, which was published some years ago under the title *Vita Vitæ Nostræ meditantibus proposita*. That work was intended to furnish a convenient arrangement of the whole of our Lord's Life for the use of persons who are in the habit of meditating on that inexhaustible subject, and who are able, more or less, to find for themselves such reflections and affections on the several points as are furnished in so many beautiful books of meditations, properly so called. It was also intended to serve as the basis of a larger work, which was to be a commentary on the whole subject of our Lord's Life. Of this larger work three volumes have been already published, embracing only a certain portion of the first year of our Lord's Public Life. Other volumes are in preparation, and, if life and health and leisure are granted to me, I trust before long to see the work completed, though I am too well aware of the uncertainties under which any large undertaking must be carried on to be sanguine in such expectations. But I have been

so often asked to publish an edition of the *Vita Vitæ Nostræ* in English, that I have thought it better to do this at once, rather than to wait, as I had originally intended, for the completion of the commentary before doing so. The present volumes will have the advantage of being complete in themselves, and they contain the explanation of the arrangement which has been adopted in the Harmony, not, indeed, as fully drawn out as I could wish, but still at sufficient length to witness to what I believe are the true principles on which such an arrangement should be made.

In order to secure this result, I have added, as the reader will see, a great deal of matter which is not to be found in the Latin edition. I have tried to explain the divisions into which our Lord's Life naturally falls, and to illustrate each of those divisions, as far as was absolutely necessary, by chapters which aim at setting forth, in the first place, the onward flow of the events of our Lord's Life, and in the second, the part taken by each of the four Evangelists in the construction, so to speak, of the history as a whole. The notes which are added at the end of each division of the Harmony are meant to explain difficulties as they arise, in such a way as to confirm the general principles which have been followed in the arrangement of the text. Finally, I have used, though not without a very few verbal alterations where the meaning of the original has evidently been missed, the Rheims translation of the New Testament which is familiar to Catholic readers. That translation has often been decried, but I am persuaded



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that it is as beautiful and as accurate as any that exists. I have used it in its present state, as it is found in the Catholic Bibles in common use.

## II.

I fear that the study of what is commonly known as the Harmony of the Gospels has yet to win its way to its due place in the estimation of Catholic critics. It presents certain obvious difficulties, from which many turn away. There are many more, who hardly see the advantages that its admirers claim for it. Some have a tacit fear that the apparent discrepancies between the several Gospel accounts may turn out to be irreconcilable, and others see no great good to be gained by their perfect reconciliation. But the time is surely come or coming when it cannot be allowed to Catholic writers to admit the first of these two propositions, at least in its extreme form, which would confess that there are contradictions in the Gospel history which are in themselves, and not merely to our limited knowledge, truly such. As to the other, it ought at least to be noted that the claim which is made for the study of Harmony is not limited to the mere plausible solution of a difficulty. Those who have given themselves to this study profess to find that it adds a fresh light to the history on which its labours are spent, quite apart from the simple refutation of objections which might otherwise be embarrassing. They have indeed to make themselves conversant with many questions of detail, matters of verbal criticism, nice distinctions, and the

like. But they profess to find themselves rewarded, not only by the elucidation of difficulties, but by what seems to them to be a clearer intelligence of the whole plan and method and development of the work of our Lord upon the earth. And beyond this, another very interesting subject is opened to them in the gradual formation of the Gospel History, as we have it from the hands of the Church. This subject has its own great beauties, and it throws very great light, in its turn, upon many apparent difficulties in the Gospels themselves.

Every work like the present, and especially a work which is mainly occupied with the results and not the processes of critical study, must be based on certain principles, both as to the Gospels themselves and their relation to the general history of our Lord, which principles are not elaborately proved in the work itself. It would be quite out of place here to endeavour to establish the genuineness and authenticity of the books of the four Evangelists. We have a right to treat them as the works of the authors whose names they bear, mainly for two reasons, either of which is abundantly and superabundantly sufficient with all men who are prepared to treat the matter seriously and candidly, and not in the spirit of childishness which pervades so much of the literature of our time—even that part of it which professes to treat of matters the most important on which the human mind can be occupied. The four Gospels may be considered and dealt with on the same principles as the works of any other ancient writer, Cicero, Cæsar, Tacitus, or Seneca. But there are no ancient writers

whose works come to us with half so much certainty, even on simply critical grounds. But further, that has happened in the case of the Gospels which cannot be said to have happened in the case of any other books, except such as so far are like them in the peculiarity of having been the authoritative books of a society which has been spread either over the whole world or over large portions of the globe. The guarantee of the Church for the Gospels is at all events such a guarantee as might be furnished for the genuineness, let us say, of four paintings, one by each of four great masters, which had been carefully guarded and watched over by a society of artists, who considered them the greatest treasures of the kind which the world possesses, this society formally established and continued by unbroken historical succession from the days of the masters in question to our own. To say that, even putting aside all special providential guardianship over the Gospels, we are far more certain about them than we should be in the case supposed about the four pictures, is greatly to understate the case. The perpetual influence and life, so to speak, of the Gospels, such as we have them, in the Church, establish the truth that they are what they are called with a force of evidence quite as strong, to say the least, as that by which we know Rome to be Rome, or Athens to be Athens.

On the other hand, such matters as the relations of the Gospel narratives to the Life of our Lord as a whole, the scope and intention with which they were originally compiled, how far they had an existence in

the current traditions or the oral teaching of the Church before they assumed their present form, the relations also of the later writers of these books to those who came earlier, and the like, are all subjects which must be ascertained with adequate certainty before such a work as that of a Harmony can be undertaken, and no one can deny that on all these topics there are many questions which are not beyond the region of reasonable and serious debate. To a certain extent it is necessary, in a work no larger than that which is now put forward, to take conclusions on these subjects also for granted, and if they are not here supported by the arguments which belong to them, I trust it will not be supposed that the literature of the subject has either been unknown or cast aside as useless. There are no assumptions which underlie the fabric of this little work which have not been worked out as reasonable conclusions by a series of writers whose works are in the hands of scholars. It is obvious on the face of the question, that the four Gospels do not profess to give us a complete view, even of that comparatively small part of our Lord's earthly existence to which they refer. It may also be considered as a matter on which scholars are agreed that in a certain sense 'the Gospel' existed before it was written. When St. Paul, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians,<sup>1</sup> spoke of St. Luke—as it is commonly thought—as the 'brother whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches,' he probably wrote before what we now have as the Gospel of St. Luke existed in its present form. Whether

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 18.

or not it was the special office of those whom he speaks of in another Epistle as 'evangelists,' and of whom the deacon Philip was one, to relate and comment upon the incidents of our Lord's life and His carefully recorded sayings, it is clear that there must have been from the earliest days some such office and some such teaching, on which the practical system of Christian morality, the imitation of the virtues of our Lord considered as our great Example, and the following out of His peculiar precepts and counsels of perfection, must have been built. The Epistles of the Apostles evidently suppose a large range of practical, we may surely say catechetical, teaching<sup>2</sup> of this kind, and the basis on which this must have been built must have been the substance of our Gospels. It is not straining conjecture too far to suppose that something of this kind formed a considerable part of that 'ministry of the word' to which, together with prayer,<sup>3</sup> the Apostles mainly devoted themselves in the infant Church at Jerusalem. But the existence and daily application of teaching of this kind, which embodied in so large a measure the acts and sayings of our Blessed Lord during the time which He had spent, more or less, in the company of the Apostles, must of necessity have led in the course of time to the formation of some authentic manuals, as we should call them, on the subject. At first no doubt the Apostles

<sup>2</sup> Cf. The preface of St. Luke, 'that thou mayest know the truth of those words in which thou hast been instructed'—*ἵνα ἐπίγνῃς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν.*

<sup>3</sup> Acts vi. 4.



would themselves be the chief instructors, and their memories, aided by the promised assistance of the Holy Ghost,<sup>4</sup> would secure that faithfulness and uniformity in the relation of what our Lord had said and done and commanded which the importance of the subject-matter required. In process of time, and indeed very shortly, others would have to be employed in the same work.

But further, it would be altogether contrary to the spirit of the Christian system, that this most important sphere should have been left to unauthorized teachers or to hazards of human minds and memories. It is probable that long before the Apostles separated, as the preaching of the Gospel spread from city to city and from land to land, this teaching concerning our Blessed Lord would have become fixed, regulated, and recorded. This may be considered as the nucleus of what we now call the Gospel history. Even before it was committed to writing, it would take shape and form and character, according to the persons who were its authoritative exponents and the spiritual needs or even the controversial position, or again the national and social peculiarities, of the community to which it was addressed. It would gradually become a history, or it would assume the character of a series of arguments from the fulfilment of prophecy, or, again, form a chain of evidences of miraculous power by which the teaching and mission of our Lord had been attested, or it would bring into prominence doctrinal truths concerning our Lord's Person, according to circumstances of place or

<sup>4</sup> St. John xvi. 26.

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time or person. The Apostles could change the character of their instruction when they changed the sphere of their Evangelical labours. But when the substance of this teaching came to be consigned to writing, it could no longer vary in the mouth of the same teacher as he addressed himself to Jews or Jewish Christians, whose faith would be confirmed by the argument from prophecy, or to Gentile converts, who might be chiefly won by the evidence of miraculous signs. It could no longer take one shape at Jerusalem, another in Antioch, another in Rome, and another in Ephesus. Thus in the nature of things, supposing that there was any Gospel teaching, as we call it, at all, and supposing that that teaching, in course of time, had of necessity to be put into writing, the multiplicity and variety of the records which we call Gospels have their foundation. They would not be memoirs or histories, originally and principally, but as time went on, and one Evangelist succeeded another, especially as the Churches multiplied and the faith became universal, the authentic Gospels that came latest to light would be more historical and more supplementary than those which had gone before them. Thus what had at first been almost a series of heads for instruction, a sort of treatise for the use of teachers, would gradually be filled up by the addition of historical statements which extended over the whole of our Lord's Life, and whole ranges of His doctrine, His conversations with His friends or His disputations with His enemies, would be added to the treasures of the Church. This could only be done by a set of authoritative gospels.

## III.

This is a very short and even crude statement of what is very generally believed as to the origin of the Gospels. Catholics and most who call themselves Christians believe more than this, for they believe that the several Evangelists of the Church were divinely appointed to their work, and that they had that special assistance and guidance of the Holy Ghost which makes them and others the human authors of books of Sacred Scripture. But this Christian belief does not preclude the influence of other more natural elements in the case of the Evangelists. It does not shut out the individual character, or the personal experience, or the acquired knowledge, or the turn of mind, or the habit of thought, or the kind of education or association, or the methods of expression, the peculiar tastes or imagery, the natural and cultivated modesty or reserve or simplicity or picturesqueness, which might have distinguished the same authors if they had produced books which were merely human in every respect. It does not preclude the careful adaptation of their works to those for whose use they were more immediately composed, and this careful adaptation must of necessity have had its effect not only on what was inserted in each composition, but also on what was omitted in each. The very idea of a Gospel, such as we imagine it, was in the first instance a selection rather than a narrative the rule of which is that all should be stated that is known. And the same principle would operate, not only in the selection of this or that incident



or point of teaching in particular cases, but also in the manner in which it might be related and the prominence given to this or that particular feature.

We must go a step further in the statement of what may be fairly taken for granted in a work like the present, inasmuch as it rests, if not on what is unanimously admitted among critics, at least on what is generally held as supported by proofs which cannot be lightly disregarded. Any Harmony which takes into consideration, as one of its principal guides and securities against error, the characteristic peculiarities and the particular scope and range of the several Evangelists, must be based upon a certain ascertained view with regard to each. Here, of course, there cannot be unanimity, for critics have proposed very different theories on the point. Still no one can be blamed for assuming as the guides and rules of his reasoning on the matter, those opinions as to the four Evangelists, which are the most ancient, the most generally accepted, and the most solidly confirmed by the internal evidence of the Gospels themselves. It is assumed, therefore, for the purposes of the present Harmony that St. Matthew's Gospel represents the teaching as to our Lord's Life and work which was adapted, in the first instance, to the Church at Jerusalem, in which the Apostles themselves were the first to labour. It is obviously full of features which witness to the design of its author to suit it to the needs of such a community—a community which was thoroughly Christian, which in a certain sense carried out Christian principles in its own organization to an extent which

has never been rivalled, forming the whole body of its members almost into what we should call a great religious order—and which yet did not cease to be Jewish, to worship in the Temple, and to a great extent keep up the practice of the Law of Moses. Any good introduction to the Gospels will give the reader a full enumeration of the characteristics of St. Matthew's Gospel, on which this is not the place to dwell at any length. It is penetrated from beginning to end by the thought that in our Lord were fulfilled all the types, all the anticipations, all the prophecies of the older dispensation. This and other features lie on the surface of St. Matthew's Gospel. It is not so obvious, but it seems equally true, to say that it is penned with a carefulness of design which makes it almost as much a treatise as a narrative, with a distinct purpose of embodying our Lord's general teaching to an extent and with a completeness which can be asserted of no other of the Gospels. It alone contains the Sermon on the Mount, and it gives us a far greater number of the parables and of the teachings of our Lord as to the counsels of perfection than any other. To these purposes St. Matthew has frequently, as might be expected in the writer of such a treatise, made the order of time subservient. He is also characteristically and systematically concise. His pen does not flow with the ease which belongs to St. Luke, but it need not have been any want of such fluency that occasioned his great brevity. It is so much his custom to group together just the main incidents of a story or the chief points of an instruction, that we are

sometimes tempted to think that what we have before us is rather a collection of notes or headings than a developed statement.

The structure of St. Matthew's Gospel has probably been regulated by more than one principle of method in the mind of its author. But it does not belong to this part of our work to enter upon a full discussion of such questions. If we consider the arrangement of this first Gospel with reference to its use in a Harmony such as that before us, we are struck by the following features. It recognizes the main divisions of our Lord's Life, as they are laid down in the second chapter of this volume, although in one or two instances it departs so far from the chronological order as to place before and after one of those points at which, according to this view, our Lord's Life is broken up, incidents which appear so far to be out of their proper order in respect of that point. In this respect St. Matthew's Gospel differs from the other three. Nowhere in St. Mark, nowhere in St. Luke, nowhere in St. John are there any such transpositions. But it is obvious, on closer inspection, that St. Matthew had a perfectly sound reason for this in the order of ideas which he has followed. The plan of his Gospel is very simple and very obvious, and explains in a manner quite sufficiently satisfactory that apparent neglect of order which is, in truth, the faithful adherence to an order of a higher kind than that of mere historical sequence.

The series of sections, so to call them, into which the evident grouping of his matter makes it natural to

divide the work of this Evangelist, stand out almost at first sight. The first three chapters, and the first part of the fourth in our common division, are devoted to what we may call the preliminary mysteries—the Nativity, Epiphany, Flight into Egypt, Life at Nazareth, St. John's Baptism and Preaching, our Lord's reception of Baptism, His Fasting and Temptation. In all these, as is pointed out below, St. Matthew dwells especially on the fulfilment of prophecy. This it is that guides his selection of incidents, to this it is that he pointedly and repeatedly directs the attention of his readers, while it is in his mind even when he does not quote the ancient prophets, as in the case of the preaching of St. John Baptist and the Temptation of our Lord. He then proceeds to the Galilæan preaching, and, after a very short introduction, gives us in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters the great summary of our Lord's teaching which is known as the Sermon on the Mount. Immediately after this he gives a chain of miracles of various kinds, selected, as it were, to show our Lord's power in all its various manifestations under this head. This fills the eighth and ninth chapters. Then St. Matthew passes to our Lord's instructions to the Apostles when He sent them forth—instructions so framed as to suit all evangelical ministers in the Church to the end of time. These instructions occupy the tenth chapter. Then follows the eleventh chapter, in which St. Matthew adds a sort of supplement to the instructions and charge given to the Apostles, containing as they do so much in the way of prophecy as to their reception

by men. This supplement consists of an account of the reception which St. John Baptist and our Lord Himself had met with, and grows out of the incident of St. John's message to our Lord—'Art Thou He that is to come?'—in the answer to which we have another general fulfilment of prophecy pointed out by our Lord Himself. The twelfth chapter is occupied by an account of the successive phases of opposition which had so much influence on our Lord's conduct, the charges of violating the Sabbath and of being in league with Satan, and the demand for a sign from heaven. Then St. Matthew gives us the parables at greater length than the other Evangelists, and relates the chief incidents between the beginning of the parabolic teaching and the Confession of St. Peter. We thus reach the middle of the sixteenth chapter, and what we may fairly call the most marked dividing-point in our Lord's Life. From this point to the end of the twentieth chapter he is occupied with our Lord's teaching after the Confession of St. Peter, the beginning of the preaching of the Cross, and the mystery of the Transfiguration, up to His final entrance into Jerusalem on the Day of Palms. He leaves out altogether, both here and in all previous parts of His Gospel, anything that happened in Jerusalem or Judæa, and the teaching to which these last-mentioned chapters are devoted is chiefly what we usually call the Counsels of Perfection. From the beginning of the twentieth chapter to the end of the twenty-fifth, he is occupied with the teachings of Holy Week. The twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters contain



his account of the Last Supper and the Passion, and the short twenty-eighth chapter gives all that he has to say as to the Resurrection.

If we are to judge from internal evidence, it seems unlikely that St. Matthew's Gospel can have been composed in its present form at the very outset of the Apostolical teaching in Jerusalem. Its arrangement is elaborate, it is crowded with points of teaching which belong to an advanced stage of Christian life, and it seems improbable that it could have been written before the Church had had some experience in her own history of that persecution which her Lord had predicted for her. Thus, if when the Apostles separated for their missions in different parts of the world, they took with them, as some old traditions attest, the Gospel of St. Matthew, and if other teachers in every part were furnished with the same volume, it would be found in many cases that something else was required for communities of converts who had been chiefly heathens, and indeed for all communities which were in the earlier stages of their Christian training. Whatever modern critics may say as to the old statement that St. Mark's Gospel was written at the request of the Roman converts as an echo and memorial of the teaching of St. Peter, no one can deny that the internal evidence of some such origin is so very strong that it might almost be said to be enough to account for the existence of the tradition. Many writers of modern times have considered that this Gospel must have been the earliest in point of time of composition, on account of its simple and elementary character, when compared

with that of St. Matthew. But it cannot be allowed that this undeniably true feature in St. Mark is conclusive as to priority of time. As has been already hinted, it is just as possible that we have here an abridged and simplified form of the substance of St. Matthew's Gospel, as that we have a form of the Gospel records earlier than that of the last-named Evangelist. St. Mark, when he relates, as he does through a great part of his Gospel, what is also found in St. Matthew, is very commonly fuller in detail and far more descriptive than the latter. He is less concise, but then he relates far fewer things. His Gospel is not nearly so long as that of St. Matthew, because he omits a very large proportion of the words of our Lord as contrasted with His actions. St. Mark dwells with especial love on His miracles, as St. Matthew had dwelt with especial love on His parables, His discourses, and the fulfilments of prophecy. And, with reference to the first great characteristic of St. Matthew which strikes the attention, that is, the Hebrew character of his work, St. Mark is in this respect in clear and decided contrast to him. He evidently writes for Gentiles; he drops the incidents and sayings which require special knowledge of the Jewish system or customs in order to be understood, or he explains them if he inserts them. St. Mark's Gospel also has nothing of the character of a treatise about it, and thus the departures from the chronological order, which St. Matthew has made in order to follow the arrangement of his own ideas, are usually corrected by St. Mark.

The structure and arrangement of St. Mark's Gospel

are so very simple as to require very few words in order to explain them. St. Mark leaves out almost all the discourses of our Lord, and restores to their proper place, if we may use such a term, the few miracles and incidents which St. Matthew's order has led that Evangelist to transpose. Thus St. Mark's Gospel might be made the stem, so to speak, on which all that the other Evangelists have related and which he does not relate might be ingrafted. He seems to have put nothing out of its order except, for an obvious reason, the Supper at Bethany. He says nothing about the mysteries of our Lord's Birth and Infancy, but begins at once with the Baptism of St. John, from which he passes rapidly to the Temptation and the beginning of the Galilæan preaching. By the end of his second chapter we have reached the first break in our Lord's history after His Preaching had begun, that is, His quarrel with the Pharisees and authorities at Jerusalem about the Sabbath. The third chapter continues the history, mentioning the appointment of the Apostles and the charge of casting out devils through the power of Satan himself; and at the beginning of the fourth chapter we have reached the period of the teaching by parables. From this place down to the middle of the eighth chapter St. Mark follows rather more minutely the order of events to the confession of St. Peter. The ninth chapter contains the history of the Transfiguration, and the remainder of our Lord's Galilæan teaching. The tenth relates His teaching in Peræa, following St. Matthew's lead as to the prominence given to the Counsels of Per-



fection. The eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth relate the incidents of Palm Sunday and Holy Week, up to the Thursday. The fourteenth and fifteenth are occupied with the Last Supper and the Passion, and the sixteenth contains St. Mark's account of the Resurrection and subsequent mysteries. The whole of his Gospel, as we shall see, presents scarcely any difficulties to the Harmonist, while its arrangement is of extreme value to him, as it enables him to see with certainty where St. Matthew has departed from the order of time.

The beautiful Gospel of St. Luke has many peculiar characteristics, which are drawn out in full by the writers who have done so much to illustrate this part of Scriptural criticism. It is not necessary here to dwell on these characteristics, except so far as they affect the view which is assumed as true of the relation of this Gospel to the general history. St. Luke is known to have been the companion of St. Paul, as St. Mark was the companion of St. Peter, and the third Gospel is in many respects such as we should expect to find provided for the Gentile Churches in general, the nucleus of which was so often formed out of the synagogues in the cities throughout the Empire, with their central body of Jewish residents surrounded by a larger circle of proselytes from heathenism. St. Luke's position with reference to the history of our Lord is peculiar to himself. In the first place, he professes to write at a time when a great number of attempts had been made to put into regular order the events on which the Christian faith rested. He

tells us that he has himself been furnished with all the needful information. His language leads us to expect great attention to chronological order and historical sequence. His work is more like a regular history than those of the other Evangelists. He covers the whole ground from the Annunciation to the Ascension, and there is no prominent or important feature in the whole series of the mysteries and actions of our Lord's Life which he has left untouched. At the same time, his Gospel is to a great extent new—new, either in the events which it relates or in the fresh incidents which it adds to the history of what has been already related, and he seems to make it his rule to supply omissions, and to illustrate the method and principles of our Lord's conduct by anecdotes or discourses, which resemble very much those which others have inserted, but which are not the same.

This is the particular characteristic of St. Luke's Gospel to which most attention has to be paid in the formation of a general Harmony. If we consider St. Matthew as addressing himself primarily to the Hebrew Christians, or rather to their teachers, and St. Mark as turning to the direct converts from heathenism, we may look upon St. Luke as the Evangelist of the Church as already more or less formed out of the coalescence of both bodies, or, in particular, as the Evangelist of the Churches in which the Jewish element had been more or less absorbed by the larger influx of Gentiles, great numbers of whom had passed through the stage of proselytism before they embraced the faith. That he dwells with

particular care upon the sacerdotal character of our Lord, upon His atoning office, upon the healing and and compassionate aspect of His Life, upon His love for penitents and sinners, and the like, are other features which present themselves readily to the careful student of his Gospel, but which do not belong so directly to the aspect under which we have to consider it in the arrangement of a Harmony.

The arrangement of St. Luke's Gospel is, in truth, hardly less simple than that of the work of St. Mark, except that we find in the third Gospel the more evident influence of those which have preceded it. This influence is not so much direct as indirect, but it is real and important. It is direct so far as this, that the selection of characteristic incidents and of turning points in our Lord's career, which is discernible both in St. Matthew and in St. Mark, is followed by St. Luke as a sort of rule, showing what ought to be the chief features and main divisions of a Christian Gospel. The influence is indirect, insomuch as the omissions in the preceding Gospel are very largely supplied in this, and St. Luke has had to consider, therefore, the relation of the other Gospels to the whole history of our Lord's Life; as also the importance of inserting, as far as was possible, incidents, the addition of which to the former narratives might have given them, to some extent, a character of repetition. Thus the two first chapters of St. Luke, which relate the Conception, and the Birth of our Lord Himself and of His Forerunner, together with the mysteries of the Purification, the Hidden Life,

and the Tarrying in the Temple, are entirely supplementary, even to the extent of passing over what belongs to their general subject, as for instance, the Epiphany, the Flight into Egypt, and the Massacre of the Innocents, as well as the revelation made to St. Joseph, all these things having been already mentioned by St. Matthew. The next section of St. Luke's Gospel embraces the third, fourth, and fifth chapters, in which he treats of the Baptism of St. John, our Lord's Baptism and His Temptation, and the first year of our Lord's Preaching in Galilee. Here again, he relates many things which the others had passed over, but he also inserts many which they had mentioned, and, in one or two cases, something like what they had mentioned, in order that the main outlines of the history may not be wanting to his readers. The next section extends from the beginning of the sixth chapter to the first twenty verses of the ninth and embraces the whole of what is called below the Second Period of our Lord's Public Life, from the beginning of the question about the Sabbath to the Confession of St. Peter. Here again we have St. Luke largely supplementing, and in some cases substituting, as in the crucial instance of the Sermon on the Plain. He then passes in the body of the ninth chapter to the remaining incidents of the Galilæan teaching after the Confession of St. Peter—the preaching of the Cross, the Transfiguration, the miracle of the lunatic boy, and the dispute about precedence—and then, towards the close of this chapter, begins his great supplementary contribution to the Gospel history, which lasts till the

middle of his eighteenth chapter. This, as is argued below, relates almost exclusively to a part of our Lord's Ministry which had been left altogether untouched by the earlier Evangelists—the preaching in Judæa during the latter months of the last year of His Life. St. Luke rejoins the other Evangelists at the point which has been indicated, at which point our Lord was in Peræa laying down, among other heads of teaching, some of the chief Evangelical Counsels. St. Luke, still supplementing as he goes on, follows St. Matthew and St. Mark to the entrance into Jerusalem, with which he finishes his nineteenth chapter. The twentieth and twenty-first relate to the events of Holy Week, the two next to the Passion, and the last to the Resurrection.

It remains, in this part of the work on which we are engaged, to say a few words on those characteristics of St. John, which have to be considered and allowed for by the composer of a Harmony. For the purpose of such a student, the sublime, theological, and sacramental character of the Fourth Gospel is less important than the evident intention of its author to supplement the history of our Lord as to the parts which had not fallen within the range of the Evangelists. In truth, St. John's Gospel touches the others only at one single point before he comes to the last few days of our Lord's Life, and even as to those, nine tenths of what he relates are altogether supplementary. St. John is distinguished for the great length at which he relates the words of our Lord, and the large space which he spends upon single incidents or occasions. Thus no Gospel is so



easily broken up into its component parts as this ; its arrangement becomes perfectly simple as soon as its supplementary character is recognized. The same character is perceived wherever St. John, as in his account of Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, the Passion, and the Resurrection, goes over ground which has already been trodden by others, and we have thus a very simple key furnished us to what would otherwise give rise to more than one difficulty.

St. John's Gospel may be divided nearly equally into two parts, the latter of which begins on the evening before Palm Sunday with the Supper at Bethany. The first part contains eleven chapters, according to our distribution ; the second part contains ten. The first part is wholly supplementary. Four chapters are given to a period of our Lord's Life of which nothing is said by the other Evangelists—the time between His Baptism and the beginning of His preaching in Galilee. The next six chapters, with one exception, relate what passed at Jerusalem at three several feasts. The fifth chapter relates what took place, as seems certain, at the second Pasch of the three years of His Ministry—a miracle which had immense influence on the course adopted towards Him by His enemies, and so indirectly on His own course, and a long disputation to which that miracle gave occasion. The sixth chapter relates the famous miracle of the five loaves, which took place about the time of the third Pasch, but in Galilee, not in Jerusalem. This miracle had been related by all the other Evangelists, but St. John introduces it, like the others, for the sake

of another long disputation to which it gave rise. The seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters are assigned to the sayings and doings of our Lord at the feast of Tabernacles of His last year, and at the feast of the Dedication of the Temple in the following winter. The eleventh chapter relates the death of Lazarus and the miracle of his resuscitation. As to the second part of St. John's Gospel, it is still more easily divided. The twelfth chapter gives St. John's additions to the history of Palm Sunday and Holy Week, the thirteenth to the seventeenth give his very large additions to the account of the Last Supper, the eighteenth and nineteenth contain in the same way his supplementary history of the Passion, and the two last relate to the history of the Resurrection. Looked upon historically, this Gospel is supplementary from beginning to end, and St. John himself marks his leaps, so to speak, from one period to another by words of transition, such as 'therefore,' 'now,' 'after these things,' and the like. The beginnings of the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters, and again of the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first are instances. It is very strange to see it said by some critics that the structure of the fourth Gospel presents any difficulty. It is the simplest in structure of all the four, but at the same time, on account of its supplementary character, its structure is altogether unintelligible if it be considered as a history of our Lord's Life apart from all considerations of previous narratives.

In truth, to state the fact that the late Gospels are

supplementary is to state the grounds on which the necessity, or, at least, the high importance of the study of Harmony must be defended. When St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John—each in an increasing proportion to the whole of their work—add, the first slightly, the second largely, and the third in still greater abundance, to the narrative as it stood before their time, they authorize us and even set us an example, in our endeavours to produce one full and harmonious history of our Lord's earthly Life. When, on the other hand, they leave out, as is so especially the case with St. Luke, and still more with St. John, what has been already related before them, they tacitly abandon for their own works all claim to represent that full and harmonious history of which we speak. St. Luke certainly did not mean that our Lord's teaching was complete without the Sermon on the Mount, or some of the parables which He has omitted, and St. John would not have intended us to conclude that an adequate idea of our Lord's Ministry could be formed without some account of His Galilæan preaching and miracles. Thus the Evangelists themselves most distinctly point to a history of our Lord which is to be made up out of their four works, and which is not to be found in any one of them singly. When we add to this the consideration of other omissions quite as certain, though not altogether so obvious, as those which we have mentioned, we shall see still greater reason for the studies on which we are engaged. For it is certain, as has been said, that the earlier Evangelists limit themselves, until they stand on the very threshold



of the Passion, to our Lord's preaching in Galilee. They leave altogether untold the story of our Lord's successive visits to Jerusalem during the three years, not one of which, however, was without its very momentous effect upon the course which He pursued throughout the whole of His Public Life. St. John's additions are not simple additions. They enable us to understand the rest of the history, especially after His break with the priests on the question of the Sabbath, far better than we could understand it otherwise. And, not to dwell too long on what is more properly the subject of other parts of this work, it is clear to the student of our Lord's Life as a whole that it has its onward march, its developments, its phases, that the great counsels of God are gradually unfolded in it, that our Lord only gradually manifests Himself, and His doctrine, and the plan of His kingdom, the character of His Father, and the particular path along which He has Himself to walk in order to fulfil the great work of our Redemption. In all these, as well as in the ever-darkening phases of the conduct of the priests and the people towards Him, as also in His training of the Apostles, and the increasing reserve with which He placed Divine truths before the multitudes who had proved themselves unworthy of them, there is a history to be traced out, the beauty and richness of which is the reward as well as the justification of the labours of a work such as this.

## IV.

It is out of the materials which are furnished him by the four works of which this very summary account has just been given, that the Harmonist has to construct, as far as may be, the history of our Lord's Life upon earth. It is obvious at the very first sight, that such a construction can only be a very inadequate representation of what that Life truly was. It must leave out very large spaces, and the view which it can make possible to us must be in the main external. It must be external, not merely in the manner in which any human biography must be so, but also in a further degree, because it is quite certain that the Evangelists did not set down all that they or the Apostles knew. Although it can hardly be said that the purpose of practical or catechetical instruction, which had so much to do with the composition of the earliest Gospels, influenced St. Luke and St. John in the same degree with their predecessors, still even the very latest additions to our knowledge as to our Lord's Life must have been made under a certain reserve. In the two first Gospels it is clear that many things were kept back. St. Matthew and St. Mark put down what was abundantly sufficient for the instruction of the faithful, but did not profess to aim at the complete openness of ordinary biographers. It is quite clear, for instance, that our Lord must have given the Apostles a great deal of instruction about the Church, the Sacraments, the Hierarchy, and other similar subjects, as to which

a silence which some are inclined to consider as extraordinary has been observed in the Gospels. But it is not necessary here to pursue further the question of what the Gospels might have contained. It is obvious that the records which they have preserved to us, infinitely precious as they are, and fully adequate to the purpose for which God gave the Gospels to the Church, are yet relatively scanty and, as has been said, external.

But the Harmonist might well be content if this comparative scantiness of his materials, as considered in relation to the whole Life of our Lord, were his only or his chief difficulty. The account which has been given of the origin of the Gospels is sufficient to show the very great independence of the several writers. Although there are in many parts of the Gospel history accounts by two or even by three Evangelists which are evidently descriptions or reports of the same scenes or the same words, and which are so far identical as to show that they must have had a common origin, there are frequently very considerable diversities, and sometimes these diversities appear to amount to discrepancies. Again, the order and connection of what seem to be the same incidents are very often different in the several accounts. Even in discourses and sayings of our Blessed Lord Himself there seem to be these difficulties, and an impatient critic is sometimes tempted to think that the reports in the Gospels cannot be taken as literal and accurate on account of these apparent discrepancies. Then there is often silence in one Evangelist just where we should expect him to speak, and

arguments suggest themselves from such silence against the statements elsewhere found on the same subject. Thus it appears a matter of difficulty either to maintain in all cases the perfect faithfulness of all the accounts, or to weave out of the materials which are furnished us by the several authors one consistent narrative. But the difficulties of the Harmonist, such as they are, will be abundantly manifest to any one who puts himself to the trouble of carefully perusing the pages in the following volumes, or in any similar work, which are occupied by the attempt to present the statements of the Evangelists in perfect accord and harmony. A few words may now be said as to the rules which have been followed in endeavouring to obviate these difficulties.

In the first place it is assumed that the most absolute deference is to be paid to all the positive assertions, direct or indirect, of any Evangelist. We are not at liberty to contradict them or correct them in anything that they assert, their words are to be taken in the sense in which they mean them to be taken. German rationalistic critics, who approach the Gospels with their own peculiar notions of what is possible in nature and in history, have introduced the practice of cutting up the text of the Evangelists into small portions, and declaring on their own authority whence each portion comes and what amount of credence or of respect is to be attached to each. This simple and childish method of criticism has been adopted by some popular writers in England, whose sole claim to the ear of the public has been a certain cleverness, flippancy, or even brilliancy of style.

In this way we have seen, for instance, a passage from one of our Lord's discourses in St. John commented on by one of the sophists of the day—half a verse will be pronounced genuine, as having the true ring of the words of our Lord, as the writer conceives of Him, and the other half will be tossed aside as evidently spurious, perhaps because it seems to refer to the doctrine of the Ever Blessed Trinity, or to the power of miracles which our Lord exercised. The excuse—if it be one—for such writers, is that they are mere *littérateurs*, and believe too little to have any serious purpose or sense of responsibility in what they say.

But the temptation to pull the Gospels to pieces, as it were, and rearrange them after a better plan, does not present itself to anti-Catholic writers alone. The work of a very learned Catholic author lies open before me, in which, after describing the incident of the woman taken in adultery, which is related by St. John,<sup>5</sup> the writer goes on to say that our Lord took occasion after the withdrawal of that poor woman to address to the people a passage which is found in the Sermon on the Mount, 'Judge not, and ye shall not be judged,' and the rest, down to the verse in which the image of the mote and the beam in the eye occurs. It would not be difficult to adduce a number of instances of the same kind, in which very great violence has been done to the order of the sacred text by authors who were above all others bound to treat it with devout reverence. The idea of the modern infidel writer, that the Gospels are made up

<sup>5</sup> St. John viii.



of an accumulation of small fragments, anecdotes of our Lord, what He said or did, miracles which He wrought, and the like, and that these were arranged—he does not say how this came to be done uniformly—by the collectors of such treasures, almost as prints in a portfolio, or specimens in a museum, can hardly be set aside as preposterous, if we are to take the liberty of rearranging what the Evangelists have given us without any respect to the order which they have followed. It is true that that order was not always the order of time, and when it is ascertained that another order has been followed in a particular case, and when there is reason for knowing, from the Evangelists themselves, what the order of time really is, then the ascertained order must be adopted, and to do so is in truth to respect the authority of the Evangelists. But nothing arbitrary ought to be permitted on this subject, and the Gospels must be treated, not as a quarry out of which we are to hew our materials, but as books carefully arranged by their authors, in which the connections between one event or incident and another, and the transitions from one to another, have all been made matters of thought and study by those who had the best means of ascertaining the truth and on whom the duty was incumbent of setting it forth faithfully.

It may be fairly acknowledged that we here touch on one of the greatest difficulties of the subject-matter. If the Evangelists had been modern writers, they would have added notes of warning when they turned abruptly from one point to another—they would



have alluded to former statements on the same subject when there was danger that they might seem to contradict them, they would have broken up their works by headings and marks of division, and in this way they would have precluded nine-tenths of the difficulties and objections which have been raised concerning what they have said, because they have not said more, or not spoken in a manner less abrupt and simple. But it does not follow that we have no means, especially by a careful study of the method and character of each particular Gospel, of ascertaining almost all that might have been so easily told us, in respect of these difficulties, by the Evangelists themselves. The work requires great patience, but it is a patience that is amply rewarded.

One remark may be made in general, in reference to difficulties which come from the absence of notes of transition, and the like, in the Gospels as we have them. The idea of the modern infidel has just now been mentioned in order to be reprobated as absurd. For nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that any number of current anecdotes concerning our Lord could have been combined into the four Gospels, as we have them, by scores or by hundreds of curious collectors at once. At the same time, it is by no means inconsistent either with reverence to the Evangelists or with the probabilities of the case, that the materials out of which the Gospels were framed existed in detached pieces before they were united. In the earliest of the Gospels—that is, as we believe, in that of St. Matthew—we have frequent traces of the separate existence of the

several portions which he has arranged with so much care and skill. He usually begins a new paragraph with the word *τότε*, then, as he would probably have begun the relation of the miracles or the parables or the anecdotes when he was expounding them to his hearers in the Church at Jerusalem. There are traces of the same feature in St. Mark and in St. Luke, and in St. John's Gospel, which is nothing but a succession of fragments, as we might call them, the same principle of division may be observed, though his divisions are fewer and larger than those of the others. The language and style of the several Evangelists are quite sufficiently their own to enable us to feel sure that every word in every Gospel comes straight from the author whose name that Gospel bears, although there are passages—as in the early chapters of St. Luke—where they seem to be clothing in a very transparent veil the information which has come to them from others. But this general principle as to the original form in which a great part of the Gospels may have existed is especially to be kept in mind as an answer to a great number of difficulties which arise as to order and connection. It stands to reason that in books thus composed there will be apparent an abruptness of transition or a want of perfect dovetailing which is no fault of the writers, and by which critics may often be misled.

It follows from this that it is essential to the successful formation of a Harmony on the Gospels that very

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careful study should in the first instance have been made of each Evangelist separately. It is not uncommon to find in commentators on Scripture, whether Catholic or Protestant, a want of acquaintance with the author with whom they are for the time dealing, which is hardly to be made up for by very great advancement in Scriptural learning in general. It seems strange to say it, but it is true, that a Harmonist, even more than a scholar of another kind, has need of a familiarity with the whole method and character and tone of each of the authors whose statements he has to combine. Although his object is to produce out of the works of the four Evangelists a complete history, which cannot have the peculiar characteristics of any one of the four, he will certainly fail if he has not devoted himself in the first instance to St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, as if his great aim had been to produce a perfect edition of and commentary on the work of each in particular. A Harmony is to be formed, not by neglecting or passing over the peculiarities of each, but by ascertaining them, and using them as guides. This kind of critical study must be allowed to be, as it has lately been said to be, almost in its infancy among us. When it has been pursued with faithful industry and due application of mind, it will produce, perhaps, a sort of instinct which will guide the Harmonist to conclusions, which, if he had to justify them, would require a very elaborate and a very delicate process of argument, but which are quite as sound in their subject-matter as the instinctive conclusions of a theologian.

Theology, more perhaps than any other science, suffers daily at the hands of writers and teachers who have never been trained in her schools. Every one conversant with the subject knows how a skilled theologian shrinks up, as if a chill ran through his veins, at the want of proportion and perspective, the exaggerations, the awkwardnesses, the audacities, the inaccuracies in technical language, the unsuspecting and complacent borderings upon dangerous propositions, of which very well-intentioned writers are too often guilty, who enter the arena of theological dispute without having had a distinctly theological education. Just in the same way, we may fairly claim for the study of which we are speaking, that it has its established rules and conclusions and methods and principles, and that, if he has paid no attention to these, a student who approaches the subject with nothing but a general preparation for it may find himself unconsciously trampling under foot the very principles which ought to be his guides. Not every good theologian is a good commentator on Scripture, and not every admirable commentator on the words of Scripture is a good Harmonist. The questions which belong to this particular study cannot be settled offhand. We sometimes hear great names invoked as authorities for this or that conclusion which affects the matter of which we are speaking. But they are not great authorities on this subject-matter, unless they have given it particular attention, and laboured at it on right principles.

The order of the several events which are related

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to us in the several Evangelists, can never be truly ascertained, even as far as it is ascertainable, unless the principle upon which each Gospel is constructed has been first discerned and then faithfully followed. The first very great authority in the Church who attempted to explain the Harmony would now be generally thought to have made a fatal mistake on this point. The great St. Augustine has written a famous book on the subject, but his plan throughout is to consider St. Matthew's order to be the order of time, and to bring the statements of the other Evangelists into accord with this. It would now be almost universally admitted, as we say, that this principle is a false principle, and if that is so, its influence affects, more or less, the conclusions of St. Augustine throughout the whole of his work. There cannot be a better argument for the necessity of the careful study of the construction of each Gospel, and as will be seen below, a very large number of difficulties are at once got rid of when it is acknowledged, for instance, that the order in which the events of our Lord's Life are placed in the first Gospel is subordinate to an order of ideas in the mind of the Evangelist, at least in a great part of his work. The construction of St. Mark and of St. John, as has been pointed out above, is, on the other hand, comparatively very simple. That of St. Luke is mainly ruled by the historical character of his work, as also by the principle of which we have already spoken, the principle which he has followed of telling the same story in the main as the two who preceded him, but by the insertion of anecdotes and



discourses not identical with those which they have given when others like them were at hand. Another matter for attention is the scenery, so to speak—that is, the part of the country in which the incidents occurred which are related by the several Evangelists. As to this, there is little or no difficulty as to three Evangelists. St. Matthew and St. Mark never speak of anything which belongs to the Public Ministry of our Lord which happened elsewhere than in Galilee, or, at a certain later time, in Peræa, until they come to the last few days of our Lord's Life, when He entered Jerusalem in triumph and taught in the Temple. St. John, on the other hand, has made himself the Evangelist of what occurred in Jerusalem on the occasion of our Lord's visits to that city during the time which is allotted to His Public Life. St. Luke's scene is more general, and, if the conclusions which are adopted below are admitted as sound, it will be seen that he has devoted a large part of his Gospel to a period of our Lord's Preaching which was spent mainly in the province of Judæa.

Hardly inferior in importance to a right view of the scope and plan and character of each Evangelist is the due intelligence of the relation in which they stand to each other. It is obvious that as to this point there can possibly be no agreement between the writers who hold that each Gospel was compiled separately, and that the authors of each were ignorant of the labours of the others, and those who believe, as is assumed in this work, that the later Evangelists were not only aware of what had been done before them, but wrote with a



distinct though unexpressed reference to the labours of others. This last opinion seems to me indisputably true, on account of the very strong internal evidence of the Gospels themselves, and also on account of the easy manner in which it solves, one might say, a thousand difficulties. It seems also evident, *a priori*, and from the nature of the case, that an Evangelist would be anxious to add to the store of Christian knowledge concerning our Lord, and would eagerly select for insertion in his own work what had not been inserted before. No doubt, many reasons of which we are only partially aware had an influence in producing the great reserve of the early Evangelists, as we deem it. It may be accounted for in very great measure by the didactic purpose of the first Gospels, but it is probable, that other more delicate reasons operated in the same direction. We can easily imagine, for instance, that it might have been felt that the intimate discourses between our Lord and the Apostles should not be revealed except by the Apostle of Love, and in a very different way, that the controversies and disputes at Jerusalem had better be omitted in a Gospel written in the first instance for the Christians of that city. But we are speaking rather of the manner in which the later Evangelists fill up the gaps left in the history by their predecessors, whether as to large portions of it, as is the case with St. Luke and St. John, or in matters of detail, as is the case with St. Mark. A due consideration of this important principle will be found, I am convinced, to solve a very large number of the difficulties of a Harmony.

A further safeguard against mistakes which may otherwise be very probably made, lies in the consideration of the kind of life which our Lord led during the time of His Public Ministry. It was of necessity a life of very great sameness. Everywhere He preached the same truths, taught the same doctrines, imposed the same conditions on those who accepted His teaching. Everywhere He was the same in character, condescending, affable, humble, merciful, and, ordinarily speaking, His teaching was attested by the same works of mercy and miraculous cures. And, as He found everywhere the same diseases and afflictions of a bodily and temporal kind to attract His tender compassion, so also did He find everywhere the same diseases and afflictions of the soul, the same difficulties to be overcome, the same temptations rising up to lead people away from the call which He made upon their faith and obedience. One of the most dangerous rocks against which a Harmonist ought to be warned, is the supposition that it is at all unlikely that our Lord said and did the same things over and over again in different places during the course of His three years' Ministry. That supposition is in itself obviously and grossly unreasonable. No persons in the world, except perhaps the physicians, are so constantly in the habit of repeating their own words, answering questions and difficulties over and over again, giving the same directions and using the same illustrations and enforcing the same maxims, as those whose Apostolical calling lays upon them the happy but most laborious work of following the great

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Physician of souls in the exercises of His Missionary Life. In this respect our Lord's Life had not even the variety which marks the career of St. Paul or St. Peter. Our Lord was not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He never preached out of the Holy Land, and although we find here and there mention of audiences composed of different elements—as is carefully noted for us in the case of the Sermon on the Plain as contrasted with the Sermon on the Mount—the hearers were usually and almost universally the people of one small country. In the case which has just been named we have probably the extreme difference between His audience at one time and at another. But this difference falls very far short of that which confronted St. Peter when he preached on the day of Pentecost and afterwards to Cornelius the centurion at Cæsarea, or of that which existed when St. Paul on two separate occasions preached in the synagogue at Antioch and in the Areopagus at Athens. There is every possible reason for thinking that the discourses and actions of our Lord, especially His miracles, were very constantly the same almost in every feature. The same may be said of the opposition with which He was received, the objections made to His teaching, the cavils against His conduct, the calumnies against His Life. The effect of this consideration on the decisions which the Harmonist has to make is easily stated. He must be very much on his guard against the temptation to identify similar actions and anecdotes and sayings, in the face of even slight but decided

indications of variety in the external circumstances. Such slight indications are generally the notes by which the Evángelists give us to understand that they are not speaking of the same occurrence.

This principle of not identifying too freely what seem very similar incidents of our Lord's Life, if they are faithfully reported to us, ought to be applied with particular care to the reports which we have of His Divine words. It was His habit to be perpetually using the objects of nature or art around Him, the incidents of daily life, the thousand sights and sounds in the midst of which we move; as the vehicles or illustrations of the truths which He wished to enforce. It was also His habit to speak proverbially, and in parabolic language, to put His lessons into apophthegms which could be easily remembered and carried away. This practice of our Blessed Lord has made it far more easy for us to be certain that the words which are thus reported to us come from Him. It is also very natural that such words should have been repeated over and over again in answer to the same questions or in expression of the same truths. But it also seems to have been habitual to Him to vary His words to some extent when He was putting the same truths forward under somewhat different circumstances or with a slightly different purpose. We have instances of this in some of the parables. As a general rule it is clear that very great faithfulness and reverence have been observed by the Evangelists in their reports of what He said. We can only be sure that they are perfectly accurate in

the sense in which they aimed at accuracy. They do not appear to profess to give us every word that our Lord said. He may have added many developments and illustrations to discourses like the two great Sermons. His words in the long discourse after the Last Supper may have been more abundant than our report of them. His disputations with the priests, which are related by St. John, may have lasted far longer than the time which we spend in reading them, and the arguments, of which we have the heads, may have been clothed in a fulness of language which could not be set down. Still, we have a right to insist on the perfect accuracy of the reports which are given us, whether they are meant or not to be as full as the discourses which they represent.

Here the Harmonist may be in danger of taking liberties. He may think that what appear to be slight discrepancies—sometimes even not slight—may be explained on the principle that the Evangelists have permitted themselves to report generally and vaguely, almost in words of their own, what fell from the lips of their Master. Instead of considering a difference in the reports to be an indication that they refer to two similar discourses, he may be inclined to gloss them over as two different statements of the same set of words. Now, it is not to be denied that the Evangelists have been guided to select the incidents and discourses which are most suitable for their hearers or readers, and that they have often omitted, for example, words that referred to Jewish customs or institutions or to the particular characteristic faults of Jewish sects,



when writing for Gentile Churches. Nor need it be questioned that they have been guided by this principle even so far as to omit such words or sentences in a discourse which they have still reported in general. But it is to take a step further if we are to allow that the Evangelists have taken the liberty of actually altering our Lord's words in order to represent them in such a way as may suit different readers. An instance of the maintenance of this supposition is to be found in the case of those writers, who are neither few in number nor insignificant in authority, who have identified the two great Sermons of which mention has already been made—the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain. In the case of the latter, indeed, the evidences of the intention of St. Luke to distinguish the occasion from that on which the Sermon on the Mount was delivered are plain and numerous. The Sermon on the Plain belongs to a later, though not a much later, date than the other, and the circumstances of place and audience would seem to have been as intentionally varied in St. Luke's account as was possible under the conditions under which he wrote. But we are now speaking of the internal differences, differences which lie in the language of our Lord Himself. It is perhaps too much to say that these differences are so great as to force those who maintain the identity of the two discourses upon a theory which would go far to invalidate the security which we like to feel that we have in each case an accurate report of what our Lord actually said. And yet it is easy to see that such a charge would not



be made without plausible grounds.<sup>6</sup> At all events it is clear which of the two theories gives us the greater security as to the reports. In the case of the supposition

<sup>6</sup> Some kind of comparison between the two Sermons will be found in the Essay on the Parables at the end of this volume. The remarks made above may be illustrated by a comparison of the Beatitudes as they are given in the two Sermons. The Beatitudes are short apophthegmatic sentences, as to which there ought to be no variation in two different reports which are equally faithful. Yet there is not one of the eight Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount which corresponds exactly to any one in the Sermon on the Plain. Even the first, 'Blessed are the poor *in spirit*,' is not the same as 'Blessed are ye poor.' The only way of defending the accuracy of each report—if the Sermons are not two, but one and the same—is to suppose that our Lord said all that is reported by St. Luke as well as all that is reported by St. Matthew. Of course, what our Lord said at one time He might have said at another time, and no words that He spoke but are the words of Divine wisdom. But in this supposition the report in St. Matthew is of one half of a Sermon, that in St. Luke of another half, at least as far as the Beatitudes are concerned. But then, this theory is inconsistent with any reasonable view of the remainder of the Sermon, in which the words and topics are to a great extent identical, but with two great differences. One is that St. Luke omits the whole doctrine as to the correction of false impressions as to the meaning of the Commandments, as to flight of occasions, of prayer, almsdeeds, fasting, and the like. But a simple omission does not necessarily prove the distinctness of the two discourses. The other difference in St. Luke is more fatal. His report omits a number of references to our relation to God as our Father, to confidence, indifference to worldly cares, and the like—a number of phrases and words which give a tone to the Sermon on the Mount, which is absent in that on the Plain, for a reason which may be easily divined, and which is explained in the Essay just now referred to. The natural and sufficient explanation of this difference lies in the difference of the audiences on the two several occasions, as well as in the fact that when the Sermon on the Mount was delivered there had as yet been no open breach between our Lord and the Jewish priests, while, before the Sermon on the Plain was delivered, the first great breach had occurred, and the Pharisees, even in Galilee, had leagued themselves with the partisans of Herod to take away His life. This abundantly explains the far more reserved tone of the Sermon on the Plain. But it is inconsistent with the hypothesis of the identity of the Sermons. Our Lord could not, on the same occasion, have spoken in a different tone to the same people as to their childlike relation to God.

that the discourses were really two, we have our Lord Himself varying the expressions, and not only the expressions, but in some instances the points of doctrine themselves which He puts forth to two different audiences. In each case we have what He said, and we have the additional lesson which is conveyed in the manner in which under different circumstances and at a different time He varied the points which He urged upon His hearers. In the other hypothesis we have the same discourse, but it is applied by the two several Evangelists (though they are still supposed to consider the audience and the occasion the same in our Lord's Life) to the readers to whom their two several Gospels are addressed. That is, instead of a sermon mainly the same, but preached by our Lord to different people and varied by His compassionate prudence according to what He knew of the needs of His several audiences, we have in fact two versions or representations of the same words by different Evangelists for the purposes of their own readers. In the one case the words are in both Sermons accurately reported, and come straight from our Lord, in the other they are two different versions of the same words, all the differences between which do not come from Him.

It will at all events be allowed that there should be some very good and urgent reason for our acceptance of a theory as to the reports of our Lord's words which would thus put us, as it were, at a greater distance from Him. And it is certain that the mere desire to identify everything, whether in word or action of His, which

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appears to admit of identification, can hardly be considered any such reason. What has been said as to this and other principles which, as it seems, ought to regulate the choices which a Harmonist, by the nature of his office, has to make as to the arrangement of the materials before him, may, as I trust, at least serve as evidence for the claim which has been made above, that studies of this sort have as much right to special treatment as any other branch of sacred criticism—chronology, antiquities, language, or the connection between Scriptural events and secular history. We sometimes have contemptuous language hurled at us for remarking that when our Lord said, ‘Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect,’ He did not say the same thing as when He said, ‘Be ye merciful as your Father is merciful’—or for saying that St. Luke would not have spoken of a place in a plain if he meant a mountain, or for saying that a blind man healed before our Lord entered Jericho is not the same as a blind man healed after our Lord left Jericho. But in such cases the Harmonist does not merely insist on the difference of words. He has studied the manner in which the Evangelists are wont to speak when they intend to point out a difference. He has a view about the different characters of two different discourses, which is expressed in the variation on which he insists, and not on that alone. He has a view of the arrangement of events, founded upon a comparison of the four Evangelists, and his distinction between the two discourses is an important element in the history in harmony with this view.

He has come to the conclusion that the Evangelist who mentions 'the plain' has not done so without a distinct object, that object being to add another indication of difference between one Sermon and another. He considers the difference between the two blind men, as to the place of their cure, as just as intentional a note of distinction as if the later Evangelist had said in so many words that he had designedly chosen an instance of a miracle which had never before been mentioned.

## VI.

But this Preface does not aim at treating exhaustively the whole subject of the principles of the Harmony of the Gospels. What has been said is enough to show the general rules on which the present work has been constructed. The Life of our Lord has been broken up into the great divisions which can be recognized in the Evangelists themselves, and of which an account is given in an early chapter of the work. The duration of time which is occupied by these great divisions is not a matter of certainty, but the view which has been adopted will be familiar to all who are conversant with the literature of the subject. The order of events has been mainly taken from St. Mark and St. Luke. They are the Evangelists who never depart from the order of time, except for some very special reason, whereas St. Matthew is guided by a method of his own, which has made him group together many things which were separated from each other by considerable intervals, and in some cases, therefore, invert the chronological

order. Nothing that the historical Evangelists, if we so call St. Mark and St. Luke, have assigned to any of the divisions of our Lord's Life of which mention has been made, has been placed elsewhere in the Harmony. In each of these divisions there will be found a number of incidents which have no clearly marked connection, and as to the arrangement of these within the limits specified, no Harmonist can be so confident as to quarrel with an opinion different from his own.

The feature in the arrangement of this Harmony, in which the application of the principles spoken of above has been most carefully worked out to a result to some extent new, will be found in the third part of our Lord's Public Life. There it is practically maintained that a very large part of the Gospel of St. Luke, that is the part of his Gospel which is most of all his own, from the ninth chapter to the eighteenth, relates mainly to incidents in our Lord's Life which took place in Judæa itself. As the earlier Evangelists have so entirely omitted what passed outside the limits of Galilee before the time of the Passion, this part of St. Luke's Gospel is entirely supplementary. The arguments on which this opinion is based are sketched in one of the chapters of the second volume, and may, I fear, be found by some readers to interfere unduly with the simple onward flow of the narrative. Their value must be determined by competent judges. This view has enabled me to see in a great number of instances, that what appear to be repetitions in St. Luke—out of their place—of



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sayings or doings of our Lord, which happened, as the other Evangelists relate, at an earlier period in Galilee, are in truth accounts of ordinary sayings and doings of our Lord, which were likely to take place over again when He transferred the scene of His Ministry from Galilee to Judæa. It is also possible that I may be found to have attached a more than usual importance to the principle already mentioned, which is the natural result of what is called the 'supplementary theory' as to the Gospels. It is not, as far as I can see, possible to doubt from the internal evidence of the books themselves, that the authors of the later Gospels wrote with a constant and conscious, though silent, reference to the earlier. This gives a certain higher importance to their evidence. Not, of course, that St. Mark is a higher authority than St. Matthew, or St. Luke than St. Mark, or St. John than either. But the mere fact that a later writer seems to alter the place of an incident, or the order of a series of anecdotes, is of itself of importance. He would have left things as he found them, if there had not been some reason for thinking that a mistaken impression might be derived from the former order. And as we have in St. Matthew a writer who confessedly departs from the order of time, St. Mark might naturally restore that order, whether any mistake might result from the alteration by St. Matthew or not, and if he does not, in one or two cases—while he has made the correction, so to call it, in others—an argument may fairly be drawn from his not doing so that the former



order was right. Thus the Evangelists are all of equal and supreme authority, but the latest statement which is made on any subject by any one of them comes to us like the latest decision from some court or congregation, explaining more clearly what before had been more concisely stated. And again, the theory, which seems so entirely borne out by the facts of the case, that the later Gospels are not so much exhaustive as supplementary, enables us to solve a great number of questions with comparative ease. Any one, for instance, who reads St. John's account of the Passion with the idea in his mind that it is a series of notes which add largely to our knowledge as to points on which the other Evangelists have touched but slightly, will find it a most intelligible history, whereas if it be considered in the same plane, so to speak, as the former narratives, it will certainly engender a considerable number of difficult questions. This principle, as I say, may perhaps have been used here more freely than is usual in other Harmonies.

When the *Vita Vitæ* was published, I was unable to explain at any length the principle on which the Harmony was drawn up, and it was stated in the Preface that in one or two places the order which I thought the best had not been followed, because without full explanation it might seem perplexing. I have not, however, altered in any respect in the English version the order of the *Vita Vitæ*. The reader of the notes will see here and there that some alterations might have been made. But it is enough that the few

points as to which that might have been the case have been put forward conjecturally. I should, for instance, have no objection to see the institution of the Blessed Sacrament placed in the middle of the long discourse at the Last Supper, related by St. John, and I should be inclined to separate altogether the history of St. Mary Magdalene from that of the other holy women on Easter Day. There may be a few other points as to which the principles which are here held as true might have been pushed further, but if they are true, that may safely be left to future labourers in the same field.

Such future labourers, I sincerely trust, will be many. A work like the present, which has been written at snatches of time—although it represents the result of many former years of study—cannot be expected to be perfect and final in its kind. It is enough if its principles are right, and its positive conclusions in harmony with such principles. Any writer on the subject, in the present state of learning and of opinion on the relations of the Gospels to the History of our Lord—for there are often very strong and decided opinions where there is no great learning—must expect to startle some readers and to be treated by others with a certain impatience and contempt. But I will venture to promise the student who shall labour in this field a very abundant compensation. He will, if I am not mistaken, seem to understand better and better, the more deep are his studies, the wonderful unfolding of the Divine Counsels which is contained in the Life of our Lord. He will,

I think, understand Him and His historians in a new way. He will see, in particular, how the whole of human history is, in a certain sense, summed up in the Gospels, because the only aspect of human history which is worth studying is that of the dealings of the human heart in various conditions with the continually proffered mercies and graces of God. All the elements of the story of the Catholic Church are already to be found at work in the three short years of the Public Life of her Divine Founder. And, although a work like the present is not directly controversial and argumentative, I think no one will ever study the Gospels in the manner which belongs to this subject without finding his faith immensely confirmed and made more intelligent. The close acquaintance with each Evangelist separately which the study of Harmony requires, seems to me to produce an ever-increasing accumulation of proofs of the extraordinary accuracy of the Gospels, as well as of their very great nearness to the events of which they speak. It may almost be said that the difficulties of serious criticism die away of themselves in the face of such studies, not less entirely than the fantastic conceits of the frivolous sceptics of our time.

The study of the Gospels, in the manner of which I have been speaking, is not an occupation which is only within the reach of the learned, of persons who have a large amount of leisure or an unusual gift of intelligence. So far is this from being the case, that I do not know any principle that is applied in the following pages which is not perfectly intelligible to Christians of ordinary

information, or any conclusion which requires more than simple reverence for the Word of God and consideration of the circumstances under which the Gospels were written, in order to make it plain. I shall not have laboured in vain if I can help Catholics of all classes among us to become more and more practically familiar with the Gospel history. The Gospels are the inheritance of the Christian people in all ages, but an intelligent acquaintance with them would be a specially powerful protection against the sophistries and illusions of our own time. From the highest forms of Protestantism down to the lowest phases of opinion, hardly to be called Christianity, from the objections which are raised under the name of science and history to the most unsubstantial of subjective dreamings, theological error as well as sentimental wilfulness, universalism and immorality, as well as sectarian obstinacy—all popular forms of falsehood and deception drop off into dust before the true knowledge of our Lord. And, on the other hand, the Four Gospels contain all the heavenly lore which the Church has developed as to the practice of virtue, the path of perfection, union with God, the highest and most continued prayer. These are treasures which belong to all the children of God, and the shrine in which they are stored up is the Life of Jesus Christ.

H. J. C.

*London Feast of St. John the Evangelist, 1876.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### *The Life of our Blessed Lord as independent of its records.*

THE life of every intelligent creature of God has depths which no eye but that of the Creator Himself can sound. The true life of every spiritual nature must be spiritual, and it is God alone that knoweth the heart and discerneth the spirit. He may grant this power in some measure to His saints even in their mortal stage of existence, as He grants it more fully to the blessed in heaven, where all veils are taken away, and where the contemplation of His gifts and His action on the souls of each and all forms and will form an integral part of their felicity. But the power of reading the soul and tracing its life is His alone originally, and that alone is its full and true history which lies before His eyes. If we leave the thought of our lives as they are in His sight, and turn to our own consciousness, we are at once aware how little it is that we know, and yet how meagre in comparison with that little must that be which is known to others. All human biographies are external, and leave the inner life only partially disclosed. They may be based on very intimate knowledge, the materials on which they are founded may be rich, varied, and authentic, and yet there are whole regions of our existence to which they cannot penetrate. So it is, when one man writes the life of another, so it is in a less degree, when the subject of

the memoir is his own historian, even though he try to lay all bare with the utmost simplicity and truthfulness, as if preparing to give an account of himself to the Judge of the living and the dead.

Life has many degrees of intensity, vigour, power, and nobility—many degrees of *life*. The very lowest phases of life are separated by a marvellous distance from all that merely exists, and yet they seem hardly to be distinguished from mere existence when they are compared with higher forms in the scale to which they belong. From these lower phases the kingdom of life reaches upwards through the various natures which have proceeded from the hand of God to the sublimest of His creatures at the very footstool of His throne, and He Himself is the only essential, as He is the most perfect and the intensest, Life. As we rise in this wonderful kingdom from sphere to sphere, we find the lower grades ever perfected in the higher, while these last are adorned by more sublime gifts and faculties, the play and exercise and development of which open to them new relations to the source of all life and to all that lives through Him. Thus life consists of an ever increasing variety of manifestations, and the forces which energize in its marvellous unity are continually growing in sublimity and activity. All are gifts from the One true Life; all are participations, according to the measure of the capacity of the natures on which they are bestowed, of the ineffable power and many-sided force of God. For with Him 'is the fountain of life, and in His light we shall see light.'<sup>1</sup>

Let us leave aside lower existences, and use the gradations of intellectual and moral life, as far as we are able to note them, as analogies from which to reason as to those manifold stages of spiritual life which rise so far beyond

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xxxv. 10.

our ken, that our intelligence is almost blind and our tongue almost dumb concerning them. The life of a vigorous member of a cultivated and intellectual race is far more truly life than that of a savage. It seems to range among nobler objects, to wield faculties of enjoyment or intelligence with which the other has nothing in common—its aims and aspirations, its resources and achievements, seem to belong to a higher order of existence and a finer and more elaborate organization. The savage lacks the ideas which would make him at home in a civilized community, and the scanty resources of his language make it an inadequate vehicle for communication in such a society. So again, the same person, as he advances from infancy to manhood under favourable circumstances of education and opportunity, appears to be ever unfolding new powers and energies which leave his original capacities so far beneath them as to seem the endowments of a new nature. But no differences between man and child, or between race and race, in the intellectual order, are so wide or so absolute as those which intervene between the several stages of spiritual illumination and advancement. The higher life of the saints of God, which is but partially revealed even to the scrutiny of the most earnest student whom the requirements of the Church may devote to its investigation, seems very soon to pass into regions in which human thought and human language are strained beyond their powers. This spiritual and supernatural life of the soul specially favoured by God is more truly and more intensely life than anything else which may bear the name in this world, because it is a nearer and larger participation of the Life of Him Who alone truly lives, and to Whom, as our Lord said to the Sadducees, all live, whether in the most humble grades of intelligent existence or in the sublime beauty and grandeur of the

seraphim nearest to the throne. And yet to speak of that life would require a new language, as to understand it requires an elevation of the mind of man far above the level of his natural destiny. And, if this be true even of the spiritual life, as it may be shared by saints, still sojourners upon earth, how far more true must it be of the life of the blessed in heaven—how far more true of that highest and most Divine of all created lives, the Life of the Sacred Humanity which has been united once for all to the Person of the Eternal Son of God?

The moment at which the Incarnation took place in the womb of our Blessed Lady at Nazareth witnessed a change more marvellous than any which had ever been before or can be again. No created eye or mind was witness of what we can but feebly conceive as that eternity which was before the whole universe, spiritual and material, was called into being at the will of the Ever Blessed Trinity. The moment of creation, 'when the morning stars praised' Him 'together, and all the sons of God made a joyful melody,'<sup>2</sup> is the only moment that can be in any way compared to that which succeeded on Mary's last answer to the message of Gabriel. 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us!' The distance between God and His creatures was bridged over or swallowed up, because God became His own creature. The Sacred Humanity which was then called into existence by the operation of the Holy Ghost was in itself the highest, the noblest, the most beautiful of the works of creation, by nature 'a little lower than the angels,'<sup>3</sup> but crowned with glory and honour and set over all the works of God's hands. The Hypostatic Union was a greater act, if we may so measure what God does, than the original creation out of nothing. A new light shot through the whole universe, a new creation had

<sup>2</sup> Job xxxviii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm viii. 6.



begun, which was never to pass away, the whole of which was the issue of the act which had been now accomplished. 'For of His fulness we all receive, and grace for grace.'<sup>4</sup> 'He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, for in Him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by Him and in Him, and He is before all, and by Him all things consist.' These words may probably refer to the Eternal Son of God independently of His Incarnation, which, however, must be considered as the end of the whole creation; but the Apostle continues, 'and He is the head of the body, the Church, Who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He may have the primacy, because in Him it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His Cross, both as to the things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven.'<sup>5</sup> The Life which then sprang up in the womb of our Blessed Lady is the centre and principle, the consummation, perfection, and crown of all the works of God. It is based upon that ineffable and surpassing mystery of the Hypostatic Union which baffles the keenest understandings of the Cherubim, and its effects reach, as the Scriptures tell us, throughout all time, past, present, and future. It is the fulfilment of all the designs and decrees of God in His Creation and Providence, to that 'mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Him, in the dispensation of the fulness of time to re-establish all things in Christ, that are in heaven and on earth.'<sup>6</sup> It is the accomplishment of all the prophecies, promises, and

<sup>4</sup> St. John i. 16.<sup>5</sup> Coloss. i. 15—20.<sup>6</sup> Ephes. i. 9, 10.

types, whether in persons or in things, which God had given from the beginning of the world, as it is also the foundation and principle and prophecy, the normal pattern and meritorious cause, of the Christian and regenerate life of all the members of the mystical Body and of that Body itself as such, in time and eternity.

This Life gathers into itself the whole antecedent history of the children and the 'city' of God, of God's dealings with them and provisions for them, and of the treatment which they met with from the world, while at the same time it traces the lines on which the path of the Church and of her saints is to proceed, planting the footsteps which they are to follow, hallowing and blessing the ground which they are to occupy, drawing down first on itself and then on them the light and strength which come from the loving regard of God the Father, meeting and overcoming for them the temptations, the snares, the enmities of those who first assailed and hated the Master and were afterwards to assail and hate the servants and disciples. Every phase and department of human life, its joys and sorrows, its hopes and fears, its ordinary occupations and common features and inevitable vicissitudes, whether it be solitary or social, all have been touched and graced and soothed and blessed by this Life of our Life. All the conditions of our spiritual warfare and of our interior life with God have been gone through by Jesus Christ. He has placed Himself in that relation to the Providence and will of His Father which He desires us to occupy, He has obeyed the guidance of the Holy Ghost as we are to obey Him, the ordinary means of grace have been made such to us by His use and by the application of His merits. He practised the Evangelical counsels and used the gifts of the Holy Ghost, both in their ordinary and extraordinary impulses: He accepted the assistance and met the onslaught and

the wiles of the spiritual friends and enemies of all human souls. He was ministered to and consoled by angels as He was tempted and assailed by devils. Within the universal range of His mission to redeem the world and teach us concerning the Father, He had a special vocation, an allotted time, a definite task to do this and not to do that, as each one of His servants has. He was not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and He forbade His Apostles to enter into any city of the Samaritans. He was not sent to work His miracles at Nazareth, but at Capharnaum: He was not to perish out of Jerusalem. In these and similar instances we see the operation of the law which brings home to us the absolute dominion of God by decrees which seem simply arbitrary, and which show the action of a Personal Will in the direction of every human life. In this respect the Life of our Lord illustrates that free choice of God as to His instruments and as to the use to which He puts His servants, which sent one Apostle to the circumcision, another to the Gentiles, which would not let St. Paul preach in the countries of Asia Minor, where St. Peter had preceded him, and of the exercise of which the lives of the saints are full, as when St. Philip and St. Francis Jerome were denied the foreign missions and confined to Rome or Naples, or when St. Bernard was allowed to organize a crusade by preaching accompanied by stupendous miracles, but not to send the crusaders forth to anything but shameful defeat, or when St. Francis Xavier was sent to die in sight of China for the conversion of which he had laboured and suffered, and was denied the crown of martyrdom for which he had constantly prayed.

These considerations are far from exhausting the thoughts which crowd upon us as we reflect on the manifold aspects and relations of the Life of our Blessed

Lord. But they may serve to show us how large a part, and that the central and most essential part, of that Life can be read by God alone, and, according to the measure of the communication which they enjoy, by the Blessed who see His Face. The very thought of the Beatific Vision is enough to remind us that the soul of our Lord from the first moment of its union with His Divinity, enjoyed that perfect Vision in which the supernatural beatitude of the creature consists. Here at once is a Life, the operations and conditions of which are beyond our comprehension. In a lesser degree, the same holds true as to that interior life of the soul with God which embraces the most beautiful, delicate, and marvellous developments of the spiritual faculties, the exercise of the highest gifts and virtues, the most subtle and tender and powerful influences of the Holy Ghost. And even as to that which more properly belongs to the knowledge of our present condition, a great deal of what we can divine concerning the interior Life of our Blessed Lord, and especially that part of it which would fall in the case of one of His chosen servants under the head of the mystical and ascetical life, is to be gathered mainly from parts of Holy Scripture other than the great narratives of the Evangelists. We thus arrive at another truth which must be borne in mind in speaking of our Lord's Life under all its relations—the truth, namely, that the whole of Scripture speaks of Him, and is in some sort a record concerning Him. Thus again, much of what we know of His Life, considered as the fulfilment of the Eternal Counsel of God for the redemption of mankind, as the working out of mysteries decreed ‘before the foundation of the world’ connected with the great acts of atonement, and redemption, reconciliation with God, the regeneration of nature itself, and the like, has to be gathered either from prophecy or type in the Old



Testament, or from the doctrinal statements concerning His Person and office and mission which are scattered over the Epistles of St. Paul and the other Apostles. Further still, the course of Christian Theology as it has swelled age after age, a 'brook becoming a great river, and a river coming near to a sea,'<sup>7</sup> has raised the level of our knowledge of 'the glory of the Lord' in the Life of Jesus Christ, and has unfolded to faith and devotion the hidden treasures of traditional doctrine concerning Him, from the fundamental truths as to the Unity of His Person to the ineffable mystery of His Sacramental Life, and the rich sources of grace, power, and light contained in the loving and atoning worship of His Sacred Heart. In the same way no features or periods of Church History, no character or life of any one among the myriad swarms of saints, who have been in various degrees and manners His representatives and the reflections of His Life to the generations in which they have been placed, but have in some sort illustrated and explained that which they have thus reflected. Thus the whole of Scripture speaks of our Lord, the whole of the Christian theology of the Church reveals Him to us, and His Life in the Church and in each one of His members sheds continually fresh light upon His Person, His character, and on the life which He led for the thirty-three years during which He conversed among men.

We are thus able to form some estimate of what may be looked for and what may not be looked for in a Life of our Lord which is based in the main upon the four Evangelical narratives. The writer of such a Life cannot pretend to penetrate that which was veiled even from the eagle eye of St. John, the Hidden Life of the Soul of Jesus Christ with His Father, the ineffable tranquil bliss of His gaze on the face of God—nor even,

<sup>7</sup> Eccclus. xxiv. 43.



except as far as it is now and then disclosed by a word or look, the personal history, so to speak, of the soul which was united to the Divinity of the Eternal Son. On the other hand, we may hope to gather from Scripture, from the theology of the Church and the teachings of her saints and doctors, at least the glorious outlines of the wonderful graces and endowments with which that soul was enriched by virtue of the Hypostatic Union, and we may venture to trace the working of those gifts in the recorded actions and sayings of our Lord Himself. In the same way we may observe, under the guidance of the Apostolic writings and other Catholic authorities, the significance of the details of that Divine part of our Lord's work upon earth which may be considered as addressed to the unseen world rather than to men, such as the sanctification of ancient rites and sacrifices, the initiation and inauguration of the Christian means of grace, and the whole of that marvellous dispensation of reconciliation and renovation which belongs especially to our Lord in His character of Mediator and High Priest. These details do not lie on the surface of the Gospel histories, except as simple facts. It was left for the Apostles and the Church, ordinarily speaking, to point out their deep theological significance and their all-powerful efficacy. Such a Life as that of which we are speaking must also in the main adhere to the limits observed in the Gospels, which leave large portions of our Lord's actual earthly existence almost without notice, as if the authors felt themselves confined to that which they themselves or their informants had witnessed. Thus the history of the Holy Family anterior to the Incarnation, and the whole of the Home Life at Nazareth, which filled by far the longest period of our Lord's sojourn upon earth, are revealed to us indeed as subjects of medi-

tation and contemplation, but are yet summed up, as to their details, in a few short sentences, pregnant in meaning and instruction and inexhaustible as seeds of Christian thought. It is much the same with what may be considered in some sense as a continuation of the Home Life through the period of our Lord's active Ministry, that is, the intercourse and communion of heart between Himself and His Blessed Mother.

There are, moreover, other silences in the Evangelical history as to which we cannot be content with the hypothesis that the Apostles and Evangelists did not know more than has been written. Such a theory is indeed in plain and flagrant contradiction to the distinct and repeated declaration of St. John that 'there are many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books which should be written.'<sup>8</sup> An old interpretation of these words considers them, not so much a mere hyperbole, as an intimation from the Evangelist that there were parts of the sayings and doings of Jesus Christ which the world would either not bear, or would not bear as set before it as part of the narrative of His Life. It is at all events certain that there must have been many things which were addressed particularly to the Apostles in that course of training to which our Lord subjected them in the central year of His Ministry. It is certain, for instance, that He must have dealt with them, not only in common, but as single persons, one by one, that His guidance of Peter and James and John must have had its special character accommodated to the soul of each, and that as Philip differed from Matthew, or Thomas from Judas, there might have been much to tell of our Lord's method with each which would have been of infinite value and

<sup>8</sup> St. John xxi. 25; xx. 30, 31.

interest. It is not to be denied that something often may be discerned, for instance, in the case of our Lord's treatment of St. Peter, or again of Judas, but the instructions which remain to us are comparatively scanty. It was not the purpose of the Evangelists to draw out the picture of our Lord as a personal Guide in all its beauty. So again, if we were to name a period of our Lord's sojourn on earth after He had gathered the Apostles around Him, as to which we should desire to have the fullest revelation concerning all that passed between Him and them, that period might probably be the forty days which intervened between the Resurrection and His Ascension. The narratives which we possess give, at first sight, rather the idea that our Lord's intercourse with the Apostles was only occasional during this time. But there is no real ground for this inference, and it vanishes at once before the statement of St. Luke in the opening verses of the Acts that 'to them He showed Himself alive after His Passion by many proofs, for forty days appearing to them and speaking of the kingdom of God.'<sup>9</sup> It is usually supposed that these conversations concerning the kingdom of God must have dwelt upon the whole constitution of the Church, its organization, its characteristic and fundamental laws, its tribunals and authorities, the relative position and duties of the various classes of its members, the principles which were to guide it in dealing with the world and the powers of the world, its means of propagation and continuance, and the like. All these subjects are exactly those which have furnished the most constant occasions for disputes and revolts and other internal difficulties, and it might seem to human wisdom that an authentic declaration of our Lord's own provisions

<sup>9</sup> Acts i. 3.

regarding such matters would have been of inestimable value. Many answers may be given to the question as to the cause of the remarkable silence of the Gospels as to this period. But it is enough for us at present to remark on the silence itself. The outlines of the Church and her constitution, so to say, as drawn by our Lord, must be gathered from the acts of the Church herself under the perpetual and infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost, and we may imagine that, if the Apostles had been urged to record them as having been settled by our Lord in order to preclude the very possibility of opposition or rebellion, they might have answered the suggestion much in the same way as that in which Abraham met the prayer of the rich glutton that Lazarus might be sent to warn his brothers. 'They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them.'<sup>10</sup> And so the Apostles might have said that the ever-living Church was to be the Infallible Teacher in each successive generation, and that if men would not listen to the Church of their own day, they would not respect even the plainest words of our Lord Himself as recorded by His Evangelists. And this may perhaps be an instance in which that interpretation of the words of St. John, of which mention has been made above, may be found true in fact, and that if everything that our Lord had said or done had been written, the world would not have borne it.

It will be natural in other parts of this work to endeavour to point out some other cases in which what must actually have happened in the earthly life of our Lord has been omitted by the Evangelists. It is indeed a fundamental error concerning them to suppose that their object in writing their narratives can be truly described as neither more nor less than that of biographers, or to speak more accurately, that the purpose

<sup>10</sup> St. Luke xvi. 29.



for which the Holy Ghost inspired them and guided them was such a purpose. This consideration, however, will come more naturally before us when we have to speak of the gradual formation of the Gospel history under the hands of the four Evangelists. For the present it is enough to say that we must neither exaggerate their omissions nor rigidly exclude the possibility of whatever they may have omitted. What they have left us is abundantly enough to occupy the devout thoughts of Christians of all ages, and to give us that adequate and truthful picture of the sayings and doings of our Blessed Lord which ranks among the greatest treasures of the Church, by the side of her lifegiving sacraments, and His own sacramental life upon her altars. Each one of the Evangelists composed his Gospel with a definite purpose—not the less special to himself, because he was at the same time guided by the Holy Ghost, in pursuing that purpose, to perform his preordained work in building up the general history from which the Church throughout all ages was to derive her knowledge, Who her Founder was and what He had done. Before him, if we may so say, lay the Life of Christ as it had been lived in the sight of men for thirty-three years, and he was to choose and to arrange accordingly as he was guided, with reference to his own immediate purpose and the ultimate purpose of God, Whose instrument he was. The issue of the separate work of the several Evangelists was the whole which we call the Gospel history—not, in the sense which we have already explained, co-extensive with and perfectly representing in all its parts the actual Life of Jesus Christ, but a perfect truthful whole in itself, revealing, when devoutly examined, an order, sequence, and progress in the external activity of our Lord which are not so obvious in the single narratives, tracing the gradual unfolding of the Divine plan of our redemption, the chain of those



successive mysteries, looking backwards to the beginning of the world, and onwards to the end of time and to eternity itself, which are the foundations of all hope and salvation and victory for the children of Adam, from the Incarnation itself to the Passion and Ascension and the sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on high. This combined history enables us to trace in the most perfect manner the various characteristics of the conduct and method of our Blessed Lord at different stages of His Ministry, the great periods into which that Ministry is divided, the different positions taken up at different times by our Lord's enemies towards Him and by Him towards them, the gradations in the formation of His Apostles, and in the public teaching of their Master. In this manner, out of the several pictures drawn by the Evangelists, a Life of Jesus Christ is constructed such as is not contained in any single one of the four, and their delineations, each of which has a colour and character of its own, blend to form one perfect image upon the soul of the devout Christian. We cannot, indeed, say that the result of this blending is exactly that which would be obtained if the Life of our Lord as it was actually passed on earth, in all its fulness of detail, could be perfectly reproduced. That consummation must be left for the time when we shall know even as we are known. But in the meantime no labour of the kind can be more profitably or happily spent than in endeavouring to render as clear and distinct and full as possible such a portraiture of our Lord's days in the flesh as is possible to us here below, and in preparing ourselves, by the use of all that the Evangelists in their narratives, or the Church in her theology, in her history, and her devotions, place within our reach of a kind that can illustrate the economy of the Incarnation, for the contemplation of the Life of our Life in the full light of the blessedness of heaven.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Divisions of the Life of our Lord in the Four Gospels.*

WE have seen that there are many and most important elements in the Human Life of our Lord which are altogether hidden from our eyes and known only to God, or, in a measure, to those blessed inhabitants of heaven to whom it pleases Him to reveal them. Our present business lies with that part of His Life which met the outward eye and which has been recorded for us, by the good Providence of God, in the four Gospels. That which is there recorded is, indeed, as has also been said, very much less than all that was made known to those who lived with Him. The more closely we examine the precious memorials which are left us in the New Testament, the more striking does the comparative slenderness of those memorials appear. It is only when we consider the scope and purpose of the Gospels that we are able to understand why they leave untold so much that we naturally desire to know. The truth, as has been said, is that the Gospels are not meant, primarily, as biographies. They are the records of a Life which had sacramental and doctrinal import from first to last, and they were drawn up in the form, mainly, of biographies, but still as manuals of doctrine rather than as histories.

This purpose is most of all evident in the first and in the last of the four Gospels. St. Matthew, as has elsewhere been shown, follows the order of ideas rather

than the order of time, at least he makes the latter order subservient to the former. Every line of his Gospel bears the impress of the circumstances under which it was composed, as the authentic memorial of the teaching of the Apostles concerning our Lord in the first years of the Church at Jerusalem. The outlines and arrangement of the whole Gospel are ruled by these circumstances. In the two following Gospels the didactic and controversial purpose which had so much influence in the composition of that of St. Matthew is not altogether neglected, but the order of events regains its natural supremacy over the order of ideas. It is very interesting to observe how St. Mark, while omitting so much that was of peculiar importance in a Gospel used, like that of St. Matthew, in a community formed out of Judaism and in continual conflict with the Synagogue, and while filling up so many of the pictures which St. Matthew has merely sketched, still refrains to so great an extent from giving any entirely new matter. St. Luke, on the other hand, supplements very largely. His Gospel is complete in itself, more complete than any other in the ground which it covers, for he tells us more about the earlier and later mysteries of our Lord's Life than St. Matthew or St. Mark. But St. Luke seems to aim all through, when he is on ground which has already been traversed by his predecessors, at setting forth the same truths and characteristics of our Lord by narratives and anecdotes which are new. It is thus to him that we owe the knowledge of a large number of incidents which had been omitted by St. Matthew and St. Mark, the absence of which from the complete Gospel history would have shorn it of some of its most beautiful features. But the fact that he still aims at striking the same notes is a proof of the influence which St. Matthew has exercised over him—an influence which is best explained by the connection of St. Matthew's

narrative with the authoritative teaching of the Apostles to the first Christians, insisting mainly upon a certain number of truths concerning our Lord, truths resting upon or illustrated by a particular cycle of His actions or words, which thus stood out in a doctrinal importance of their own. St. John's Gospel, considered as a contribution to the general Evangelical history, has evidently for its object to supply what had been omitted before him, because, probably, it did not fall so directly within the sphere of the early Apostolical teaching as addressed to the converts at Jerusalem. It consists mainly of arguments and disputations, and the incidents which it adds at the beginning, middle, and end of the Gospel narrative as it before existed, have all the very highest theological importance.

If the Life of our Lord, thus made up for us by the successive contributions of the Evangelists, be looked at as a whole, it is not difficult to discern its main most salient points, and to observe how in each separate Gospel those points are recognized as marks, so to say, of departure. If this be so, it is evident that the divisions of a book like that on which we are now engaged are neither difficult to find nor unimportant to observe. There is no need to speak of such self-evident lines of division as those which separate off the Infancy and Hidden Life, or again, the Passion and the Resurrection with the forty days which preceded the Ascension. The only question can be as to divisions in the Public Life itself of our Lord. Here, however, we find two distinct breaks which mark a change in our Lord's method of action, and these are sufficient to justify the corresponding divisions in the narrative of His Life. The second, and most obvious, of these divisions is at the point of the Confession of St. Peter. It is only after that solemn scene at which the first Apostle confessed the



Divinity of our Lord and received in return the great commission and office of being the Rock on which the Church was to be built, that our Lord began to speak either of His Church or of His Passion. This transition is noticed directly by the three first Evangelists,<sup>1</sup> and its influence is discernible even in the arrangement of St. John, who gives an almost equivalent confession of faith on the part of St. Peter in answer to our Lord's question to the Apostles after the great discourse on the Blessed Sacrament in the synagogue at Capharnaum.<sup>2</sup> Here, then, we have a marked turning point in our Lord's life, the existence of which justifies us in placing all that passed between the Confession of St. Peter and Palm Sunday in a division of its own. The other break is equally discernible in the narratives of the several Evangelists. It occurs at that point of our Lord's Life when He first drew to Himself the decided enmity and persecution of the Jewish ecclesiastical authorities in consequence of, or by occasion of, His teaching as to the Sabbath day. There is a plain difference in His attitude towards them and in their attitude towards Him, from that time. This break is fixed for us as to its date by the concurrent witness of the earlier Evangelists, which connects it with the harvest time just after the second Pasch of His Ministry.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 21 ; St. Mark viii. 31 ; St. Luke ix. 22.

<sup>2</sup> St. John vi. 68.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matt. xii. 1 ; St. Mark ii. 23 ; St. Luke vi. 1. The time of year is fixed as between Easter and Pentecost by the circumstance of the grains of corn. It must, therefore, have been about a year after the date of our Lord's passage through Samaria (St. John iv.), when the fields were 'white unto harvest' (verse 35), and about the same distance of time before the Pasch spoken of in the sixth chapter, St. John vi. 4, unless it be supposed to have happened soon after one of those two feasts. If, as is his custom all through, St. John in his fifth chapter is supplementing the narratives of the earlier Evangelists, it seems most natural to place what he relates as occurring at the feast just before the incident of the grains of corn, on which it throws so much light.



St. John, according to his custom, supplies here a new incident, and connects it with a long argumentative statement of doctrine by our Lord. In his fifth chapter he gives us what we may fairly suppose to have been the first instance in which our Lord openly and deliberately braved the prejudices of the Jews as to the point in question by the miracle wrought on the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. It seems very difficult to suppose that the feast at which this miracle was wrought was any other than that same Pasch, soon after which the earlier Evangelists place the attacks made on our Lord on account of the ripe grains of corn which the disciples plucked and rubbed in their hands on the Sabbath day. The discourse in St. John is a summary of the evidence to which our Lord appealed as proving His Divine mission and authority, and it falls naturally into its place as closing what we may call the first period of His Public Life, and as explaining also the alteration in His method of conduct, as well as in the behaviour of those who had now become His adversaries, which it is not difficult to discern in the months which intervened between this date and the great Confession of St. Peter.

The arrangement of the volume to which these chapters are an introduction is based on the facts which have here been noticed. The Infancy and Hidden Life form the first part of the general narrative. The second, third, and fourth parts contain the Public Life, from the Baptism of St. John to the beginning of Holy Week, divided into three at the two points of the persecution on account of the alleged violation of the Sabbath and of the Confession of St. Peter respectively. The fifth, sixth, and seventh parts are formed by Holy Week, the Passion, and the Resurrection with its subsequent mysteries. These are, it seems, the natural divisions

recognized by the Evangelists, and distinguished from each other in the Providence of God and in the conduct of our Lord Himself. It will be our endeavour, in the brief introductions and occasional notes which are here added to these several divisions, very shortly to characterize the chief features in each, and to point out what each Evangelist, in conformity with the general scope and tone of the Gospel, has contributed unto each respectively, and at the same time to explain, as far as is necessary for the uncontroversial reader, the reasons which seem to justify the arrangement which has been adopted as to the Harmony itself.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### *Earlier Mysteries of our Lord's Life.*

WHEN we endeavour to grasp our Lord's Life on earth as a whole, we are at once overwhelmed at the greatness of the Divine acts which are its foundation and its beginning. Christian theology finds a large part of its most delightful and sublime occupation in the attempt to unfold the wonders which are wrapped up in the seemingly simple mystery of the Incarnation itself. That God should become Man is the greatest of all God's works, and the manner and results of the Hypostatic Union, the condescension of the Eternal Son and the endowments of that Sacred Humanity which He took to Himself in the womb of Mary, are matters sublime enough to overtax the illuminated intelligences of the highest of the angels. Again, all that relates to the human part of the execution of the

great Counsel of God, the long preparation of the world, the office of the chosen people and of the line of our Lord's ancestors, the anticipations of the Law and the Prophets, the system of types, real and personal, the spiritual effect of the promise as grasped by faith, or again, the selection of the chosen Mother and the marvels of grace by which she was made fit for her position in the kingdom of God without any violation to the perfect freedom of her will—all these are matters on which contemplation may dwell for ever without exhausting them, and which study may examine for ever without penetrating them. The circumstances, also, of time, place, and condition, under which our Lord came into the world, were deliberately chosen and pre-ordained by God, and are therefore in themselves ever fresh matters for the loving meditation and thanksgiving of the children of the Church below as of the angels and saints in heaven. On the very threshold of the history we are met by two great persons whose office in the working out of the Economy of the Incarnation stands next only to that of the Blessed Mother herself. The two first mysteries which succeed the Incarnation have relation to St. John Baptist and to St. Joseph. The one is sanctified in the womb at the voice of Mary saluting his mother, the other is appointed by the angel to be the earthly father of our Lord. The mysteries which succeed have their deep significance, reaching backwards in their effects to the very dawn of our race's history, and to the selection of the first father of the chosen nation in the person of Abraham. At the Epiphany was blessed and ratified the faith of all those who from the beginning had worshipped and hoped in God according to the primitive revelation and the natural law, assisted by the grace which always flowed forth on simple hearts through

the anticipated merits of the Child Whom the Wise Kings adored. At the Circumcision, what have been called the 'sacraments' of the Old Law were blessed, and the virtues of the Precious Blood which was then first shed were applied to those to whom the painful rite which our Lord then underwent had been administered in faith. That He underwent it at all, was also a sign that He was to fulfil the whole Law with a perfect obedience before He finally freed us from the special obligations under which its precepts were enacted. The same truth was witnessed to still more solemnly and publicly at the Purification of our Lady and the Presentation in the Temple, in which mystery our Lord for the first time touched, as it were, and by touching blessed retrospectively, the Mosaic ritual and the ceremonial of the Temple worship.

It would be beyond our present purpose to do more than hint at the long and wonderful train of truths which are thus connected with these earlier mysteries of our Lord's Life in the Flesh. But it is of immediate importance that we should remark that these mysteries, which are as true and as actual, so to speak, as any of the simply external doings or sufferings of our Blessed Lord, belong almost entirely to that spiritual order which underlies all the incidents and vicissitudes of His Life. The choice and preparation of Mary, her Immaculate Conception, the endowment of her soul at its first dawn of life with spiritual graces which surpassed the attainments of the highest angels—or again, the whole spiritual history of the Sacred Humanity of our Lord, or of His chosen servants, St. Joseph and St. John, the interior Life of the Sacred Heart in the womb of His Mother, Its intense and unceasing activity in the love of God and man, or the same Life as continued after His Birth, through the thirty years of the Hidden Life—all these



and other facts like them belong in great measure to that unseen world, which is worth far more in the sight of heaven than anything material or, as we call it, historical, in a merely human sense. These things belong, indeed, to the great Counsel of God as unfolded in prophecy, and touch here and there upon the ordinary levels of history in their fulfilment of that manifold anticipation and promise of which they were the subject. But what meets the eye in all these mysteries is comparatively trifling and slender. The spirits of heaven gazed with that intense eagerness of desire and wonder of which St. Peter speaks,<sup>1</sup> on the simple incidents the chain of which we are to try to draw out, but they could read beneath the surface, and understand better than the most illuminated of earthly theologians the great part of God in what seemed outwardly so wanting in significance. But the Evangelical narrative begins, indeed, with a grand declaration of the Eternal Godhead and Sonship of Him Who became Man for us, a declaration which sums up the theology of the Church as to the Person of Christ;<sup>2</sup> and then it follows the external and human incidents, which were the mask, as it may be called, of truths which are left unspoken. The uninstructed reader might almost follow its details without more suspicion of what lay behind them than was felt by the busy worldlings of Bethlehem or the proud ecclesiastics at Jerusalem. Great as are the manifestations of our Lord, even in the mysteries of His Infancy, they do not strike upon the eye except of such as those who were watching for the salvation of Israel.

The greater part of these mysteries pass in silence and secrecy. The story begins with the priest Zachary in the Temple, withdrawn from the gaze of the people, that

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter i. 12; <sup>12</sup> <sup>α</sup> <sup>ε</sup> <sup>π</sup> <sup>ι</sup> <sup>θ</sup> <sup>υ</sup> <sup>μ</sup> <sup>ῶ</sup> <sup>σ</sup> <sup>ι</sup> <sup>ν</sup> <sup>α</sup> <sup>γ</sup> <sup>γ</sup> <sup>ε</sup> <sup>λ</sup> <sup>ο</sup> <sup>ι</sup> <sup>π</sup> <sup>α</sup> <sup>ρ</sup> <sup>α</sup> <sup>κ</sup> <sup>η</sup> <sup>ν</sup> <sup>α</sup> <sup>ι</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Below, § 2. St. John i. 1—18.



he may solemnly offer incense before the altar.<sup>3</sup> The Angel Gabriel appears to him, and tells him that his prayer is heard, and that his aged wife Elisabeth shall conceive and bear a son, who is to be great before God, a Nazarite from his mother's womb, a converter of souls in the spirit of Elias,<sup>4</sup> and the promised Forerunner, who is to prepare the way of the Lord. Zachary doubts the message, objecting his own age and that of his wife, and asks for a sign, 'How shall I know this?' The sign is at once given him. He is to be dumb until the time of the birth of his child, and the Angel reasserts his message, resting it upon his own authority: 'I am Gabriel, who stand before God, and am sent to speak to thee, and to bring thee these good tidings.' On returning to the presence of the people, Zachary was unable to utter the usual prayers or blessings, and they understood that he had seen a vision. On his return home his wife conceived, and spent the months of her pregnancy in the greatest possible retirement.

Six months had passed since the conception of the child of Zachary and Elisabeth, when the same Angel was sent to our Blessed Lady to announce to her the Incarnation of our Lord and the part which she was to bear in it.<sup>5</sup> The Gospel story tells us nothing of her marvellous preparation for the dignity thus conferred upon her, nothing even about the few external incidents of her life up to this time. We find her already the espoused wife of St. Joseph, living with him, though, as is evident from her own words, intending to remain for ever a pure Virgin. The words of Gabriel imply also all that the theology of the Church has drawn out as to the rich treasures of grace which she had received, her peculiar nearness to God, and her singular preroga-

<sup>3</sup> § 3. St. Luke i. 5—25.      <sup>4</sup> Mal. iv. 6 (quoted by St. Gabriel).

<sup>5</sup> § 4. St. Luke i. 26—38.

tive of blessedness among women—‘Hail ! full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women.’ The magnificence of the greeting startled the humility of Mary. The Angel proceeded to bid her have no fear ; she had found grace with God, the grace to be His Mother. She was to conceive and bear a Son, to Whom she was to give the name of Jesus. He was to be great, the Son of the Most High, and also the heir to the throne of David, His ancestor according to the flesh, whose seat He was to receive, and to reign for ever over the house of Jacob, and of His Kingdom there was to be no end. Our Lady’s reply expresses that perfect, unhesitating faith which was wanting in the answer of Zachary. She asked how this mystery was to be accomplished, and implied that it could be by no natural means, on account of her vow of virginity. Thus she drew from the Angel the still more magnificent declaration as to the manner of the Incarnation, by the operation of the Holy Ghost. ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also the Holy One which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ Mary had asked for no sign or proof of the Angel’s message, but Gabriel added such a sign, which was at once a confirmation of the miracle which he promised in her own case, and also a suggestion to her charity. ‘Behold thy cousin Elisabeth, she also hath conceived in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren. Because no word shall be impossible with God.’ The last clause of this speech is a reference to Scripture, quoting the words of the Angel who represented God in the famous appearance to Abraham and Isaac at Mambre, when the promise was made of the miraculous conception of Isaac, a type, under various aspects, of the conception of St. John the Baptist and of that of our Lord Himself.<sup>6</sup> After this

<sup>6</sup> Gen. xviii. 14.

twofold declaration of the Angel, our Lady gave in her absolute submission to the will of God in the words on which the Incarnation immediately followed: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to Thy word.'

The words of Gabriel, as has been seen, pointed to the state of Elisabeth as a confirmation of the still greater marvel which he had announced to Mary herself. We have here the natural connection between the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Visitation,<sup>7</sup> which must have followed almost immediately after the Annunciation. There seems no sufficient reason for doubting that the Incarnation took place at the time of year at which it is still celebrated in the Church, and if this be so, it would have been near the time when it was the custom for the Jews to go up for their annual visit to Jerusalem at the feast of the Pasch. We know from a later incident in the history that it was our Lady's habit to accompany St. Joseph on those occasions, and it would be perfectly natural and without any singularity if he thus escorted her to Jerusalem first, and then went on to leave her for her three months' visit at the dwelling of Zachary in the hill country not far from that city. When Mary thus broke in upon her cousin's retirement and the silence of prayer and contemplation which reigned in that holy home, she found that the great mystery which had been carried out in her virginal womb had been revealed to its inmates by the Holy Ghost. St. Elisabeth takes up the words of the Angel, thus adding her part to the Salutation which the Church and her children use so constantly day by day. 'Blessed thou among women, and blessed the fruit of thy womb, and whence this to me that the Mother of my Lord comes to me?' She had known her kinswoman's dignity by the joy which her unborn child

<sup>7</sup> § 5. St. Luke i. 39—56.

had shown at the sound of her voice, leaping in the womb for joy. 'Blessed thou that didst believe, for the things shall be accomplished which were said to thee from the Lord.'

It would be out of place in this short summary to dwell upon the gifts of spiritual intelligence which are thus disclosed in the mother of St. John, or in St. John himself in his mother's womb. This is one of the points at which the spiritual and, so to speak, theological unfolding of the action of God in the Incarnation touches the surface of the external history, for the words of St. Elisabeth, who spoke by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, certainly imply what is believed in the Church as to the prerogatives of the Forerunner of our Lord, and the extraordinary graces bestowed on him in his earliest infancy. But to draw that out belongs to another part of our work. For the same reason we leave unattempted here any explanation of or commentary on the Cantic of our Lady, which was first uttered on this occasion, the most sublime and the most dear to the Church of all such treasures of devotion.

The three months during which our Lady's visit to her cousin lasted must have been spent in prayer, silence, contemplation, and the holy conversation on the marvels of God and His goodness to themselves which is suggested by the words of Mary and Elisabeth as far as they are recorded for us. The Church keeps the feast of the Visitation on the day after the octave of the Birth of St. John, as if to celebrate the graces and blessings received by the holy company assembled for three months in the house of Zachary, at the close of the time instead of at the beginning. We cannot be quite certain whether our Blessed Lady left her cousin before or after the birth of her child. The language of St. Luke<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> St. Luke i. 56, 57.



may be understood as signifying that the birth was subsequent to the departure of our Lady. But it is not certain that he meant more than to finish his account of the Visitation before he began that of the nativity and training of St. John. If each narrative was separate and complete in itself, there would be no difficulty in supposing that the incidents related in the second might have fallen, in point of time, before the conclusion of the first. Humanly speaking, our Lady's return may have been fixed, as to date, by the convenience of St. Joseph, who had left his wife at the house of Zachary, and would return to fetch her home. It is at this point in the history that it is usual to place the hesitation or doubt of St. Joseph, as to which St. Matthew is our only informant.<sup>9</sup> His account is very simple, and, as will be noticed hereafter, is cast in its existing form, so to speak, on account of the argumentative purpose of this part of his Gospel. He tells us that after the espousals of St. Joseph and our Lady the marriage had never been completed in the natural way when she was found to have in her womb of the Holy Ghost. The virtue and 'justice' of St. Joseph prevented him from doing anything that might expose her to the appearance of public disgrace, and he was considering as to a kind of separation which was to be hidden and leave things as they were externally. But while he was in this mind, the Incarnation was revealed to him in a dream by an Angel. He was not to fear to take to him Mary his wife, for that which was born in her was of the Holy Ghost. The remainder of the Angel's words are almost identical with those in which the Incarnation had been announced to Mary herself. 'She shall bear a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.'

<sup>9</sup> § 6. St. Matt. i. 18—25.



This short narrative, the purpose of which is evident from what immediately follows in the first Gospel, leaves us in ignorance of a great number of details as to which conjecture has often wearied itself. We are not told, in the first place, when St. Joseph became aware of what had taken place. We are not told to what extent he was aware of the mystery, that is, whether he only knew our Blessed Lady to be with child, or whether he further knew, as St. Elisabeth knew, and as the words of St. Matthew seem to signify, that the conception of the Child was the work of the Holy Ghost. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that even if he had conjectured this from what he may have heard either from Elisabeth or Mary herself, he had no Divine communication on the subject, no intimation that he himself had any part or office in the carrying out of the great mystery which had been so long expected and desired by the devout Jews and especially by those of the house of David. This leaves uncertain to us several other details which relate to the thoughts and intentions of St. Joseph himself. Why is his 'justice' mentioned as the virtue which prevented him from anything which might seem to injure our Lady? What was that hidden manner of separation between them, which was to leave her as she was in the sight of the world, while he himself was to have less to do with her than heretofore? What was the 'taking to himself' of his wife which the Angel enjoined on him, and as to which he obeyed the Angel?

Something will elsewhere be said as to these various questions, but it will be enough here to indicate what is required in order to provide for the onward flow of the narrative. The hesitation of St. Joseph was, we cannot doubt, a point in the onward course of perfection of that great Saint at which his faithfulness was tested, such a

test being the ordinary condition of the collation of a great spiritual dignity. As Zachary and our Blessed Lady were tested by the enormous demand made on their faith by the announcements of the Angel, so was St. Joseph tried by the lack of any such announcement in his own case. His 'justice' may have been as necessary for the reception of his high office in the dispensation as the faith of Mary for her reception of her dignity. No one in the cluster of great saints who surround our Lord in His Infancy but has his moment of crucial trial on which his position seems to be dependent, and St. Joseph was thus left for awhile in ignorance, in order that he might be proved by his behaviour under the trial. We may presume from the issue that he was found perfectly faithful, and that the direction which he received was the reward of his faithfulness. As to his own conduct, his course would have been as much a matter of doubt until he received a Divine intimation of the will of God concerning it, whether he had been from the beginning aware or unaware of the great mystery which had taken place in the person of one who belonged to him as his wife, and who was not the less under his authority and his own because she was ever to remain his virgin spouse. If Mary had been his daughter instead of his wife, he would still have felt, on becoming aware that she was the Mother of God, uncertain as to his own position and his own duties in regard of her future government. Was he to discharge the duties of a husband to her still? was he to act as the father to her child? was he to undertake the management of the Holy Family? He could not do all this without some special commission from God, and until he received such a commission he would in all cases think whether it were not better to leave Mary with her relatives, in whose home another great miracle

of God's mercy had already been wrought, and to whom she had herself been directed by the Angel at her Annunciation.

It may doubtless be thought that this does not exhaust the subject and manner of the hesitation of St. Joseph in the case before us. But it can hardly be questioned that, whatever else may have been in his mind, these grounds of difficulty must have had their due part in his trouble, if trouble it was. Nor can it fairly be denied that these grounds are founded on the nature itself of the circumstances, and that it was necessary, if St. Joseph were to discharge the office which he all through did discharge as the guardian of Mary and Jesus, that his uncertainty should be set at rest in some such way as that of the Angelic Vision recorded by St. Matthew. Moreover, the words of the Angel convey a distinct injunction to him to take upon him the office of the Father of the Child Who was to be born, as well as to take charge of our Lady as his wife, for he is told to give the name of Jesus to the Child, which was the prerogative of the father.

We need only add a few words as to the point of time at which this revelation to St. Joseph is to be placed in the Gospel narrative. There are no distinct statements to guide us as to this, and it is most natural to think that it could not have been at any great distance of time after the Annunciation. The common supposition that St. Joseph observed our Lady's condition after her three months' absence is of very uncertain value. It is more likely that the point of time at which St. Joseph's mind was to be finally set at rest and guided by a clear intimation as to the will of God, was before the return took place. Then, and never after, as far as we know, he would have had an opportunity of silently leaving his

position as her husband. Then, if ever, was there a question of his 'taking her to himself' or not.<sup>10</sup>

After the return of our Lady from the house of St. Elisabeth, the holy narrative gives a full account of the birth of St. John, the manner in which the name which had been assigned to him by the Angel in the vision of Zachary was formally given to him at his circumcision, and the outburst of praise and thanksgiving with which his father broke the long silence which had been the chastisement of his hesitating faith.<sup>11</sup> But it passes over in silence the remaining six months of our Lord's Life in the womb,—a portion of His human existence full of mysteries and instruction, on which theologians have found much to say, and which has been the favourite subject of meditation with many contemplative souls. They have also loved to dwell on the thought of the sanctification of our Blessed Lady and of St. Joseph, as before of St. John and his parents, by means of the continual presence with them of the Incarnate God, a presence which was known to them, though unrecognized by all the world beside, and which they could in consequence continually and lovingly venerate by adoration and homage, interior and exterior. The next event that is mentioned is the action of the absolute master, as he was deemed, of the political and social world, the Roman Emperor Augustus, in consequence of which a census was taken of the inhabitants of Syria, among other subject countries. This obliged St. Joseph to go

<sup>10</sup> If the word *παρέλαβε* ('took to himself') be understood of any actual ceremonial of marriage (as distinct from espousals), the date of St. Joseph's vision must be put back to the very time of the Annunciation itself, and made to precede the Visitation. For, if the celebration of the marriage did not take place till after the Visitation, our Lord would have been born only six months after that celebration.

<sup>11</sup> § 7. St. Luke i. 57—80.



up to Bethlehem just at the time when our Lady's pregnancy was to issue in the birth of her Child, and, as she could not be separated from him at such a time, she was forced to accompany him on the journey.<sup>12</sup> Thus were the prophecies which fixed on Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Christ brought to their accomplishment by what was in itself either the proud whim or the astute policy of an earthly sovereign, who had at heart nothing but his own aggrandizement or the regulation or defence of his Empire. The critical question which belongs to this point of the history must be discussed elsewhere; nor need we even pause to relate at length the well-known story of the rejection of the holy pair on their arrival at Bethlehem, of the refuge which they found at last in the cave which served as a stable to the *Khan* or caravanserai, or of the birth of our Lord under all these trying circumstances of silence, obscurity, poverty, humiliation, and suffering which He had deliberately chosen for Himself and which had been so marvellously contrived for Him in the Providence of His Father. Here we find ourselves again under the loving guidance of St. Luke. He tells us how the angels were the first to honour our Lord at His Birth, and how they appeared, first one and then an innumerable multitude, to the simple shepherds watching over their flocks by night who were to be His first earthly visitants.<sup>13</sup> Thus the inhabitants of heaven and the chosen representatives of the people of God had paid their loyal homage to the new-born King. Meanwhile the Star seen in the East was the witness to Him of the material creation of which He was the Lord. The whole universe, indeed, bare witness to Him as God; now that a new creation and a new Revelation of God were to be made, the course of nature was to be innovated

<sup>12</sup> § 8. St. Luke ii. 1-7.

<sup>13</sup> § 9. St. Luke ii. 8-20.



upon by a material miracle, which virtually declared the identity between the author of the laws of the physical creation and the Redeemer of the world, the founder of the new order. The Kings themselves, who were set in motion by the Star, whether it appeared at the time of His Nativity or at that of the Annunciation, were the representatives of all those countless nations and generations to whom the natural law written in their consciences and the primitive revelation and promise which Adam had brought with him from Paradise constituted the knowledge of God, in virtue of which they were to serve Him.

The Scripture narrative, however, simply states the external facts in which the eternal counsels of God for the honour of His Son were carried out to their completion. In like manner it states in the fewest possible words what happened at the mysteries which immediately followed His Nativity, those of the Circumcision and of the Presentation in the Temple, although the acts of our Lord which are thus so plainly told were acts that may be called sacramental, and had a far-reaching power as well as a deep significance.<sup>14</sup> After the Presentation and Purification, a veil again falls upon the movements of the Holy Family, until it is lifted in order that we may find the Wise Kings from the East at the feet of our Lord.<sup>15</sup> As St. Luke clearly states that His parents returned to Nazareth after the scene in the Temple, in which holy Simeon bore witness to our Lord and foretold to the thoughtful ears of His Mother the future contradictions to which He would be exposed; and as St. Matthew states that the Wise Kings found our Lord at Bethlehem, it seems clear that we are thus implicitly told that, after some short interval, St. Joseph removed with our Lady and the

<sup>14</sup> §§ 10, 11. St. Luke ii. 21—29.

<sup>15</sup> § 12. St. Matt. ii. 1—12.

Blessed Child to take up his abode at Bethlehem. The interval between the appearance of the miraculous Star in the East and the arrival of the Wise Kings at Jerusalem must have been very considerable. The scene of their coming has often been dwelt upon by Christian contemplatives. The city was occupied on its wonted interests, the sacrifices and the worship of prayer and praise were going on in the Temple as usual, the Chief Priests bent on their wonted schemes of ambition and intrigue, the teachers were busy in their schools, and the money-changers driving their profitable trade in the sacred precincts. The rulers of the people were looking with ill-disguised suspicion and fear on the crafty and unscrupulous alien who had forced his way through bloodshed and crime to the throne, and he, in turn, regarded them and the mass of his subjects with ill-disguised scorn, not unmixed with dread, as he thought of the distant master of the world in the great Imperial City, on whose nod or frown his own fate and that of a hundred vassal or dependent kinglings hung. No more complete surprise can be imagined than that which struck the little world of Jerusalem with consternation when the strangers, evidently rich and powerful, as well as of noble rank, came to seek what no one on the spot, except a few silent devout souls, given to fastings and prayers night and day, had the least expectation of. This was the moment at which the development of the counsels of God first came sharply, and, so to speak, rudely across the course of human and secular life, stirring the fears of occupants of palaces and of worldly-minded prelates who sought their own aims in what seemed the service of the altar. For it was in the designs of Providence that this momentary shock should be given to the world, folded up as it was in the slumber and night of sin and pride and impurity. And how sharp the shock was is

apparent by the impolitic haste with which Herod spread the news by the measures which he took to satisfy the inquiry of the Wise Kings by calling the Sanhedrin together, as well as by the savage cruelty of his subsequent revenge for the failure of his designs on the Kings and our Lord in the massacre of the Innocents. And yet, although the King is frightened and the whole city thrown into excitement, the law of Providence, which seems to shroud all these mysteries of our Lord's Infancy in secrecy and silence, holds good, even as to the Epiphany itself. It may have made some stir in the neighbourhood of the house where the Holy Family dwelt, but the Kings seem to have come and gone very swiftly, and within a few hours of their departure St. Joseph was on the road to Egypt with our Lord and His Blessed Mother. The massacre of the Innocents filled the whole country with bloodshed and mourning, but the Child for Whose sake all these things were done and endured had vanished with the strange company which had come from so far to visit Him.<sup>16</sup>

It is needless to point out how very secret and silent are the other mysteries which make up this earliest and largest portion of the earthly Life of our Lord. We are not told how long was the sojourn of the Holy Family in Egypt, but, whether it were long or short, it left no traces in earthly and human history. When St. Joseph is told to go back to the Holy Land after the death of Herod, he finds that even Bethlehem, to which place his steps would naturally have returned, is too much in the eye of the world for perfect safety, and thus, although he seems before to have deliberately abandoned Nazareth, he finds it best to make it his abode.<sup>17</sup> In this, as St. Matthew points out, he was fulfilling a special line of prophecies,

<sup>16</sup> § 13. St. Matt. ii. 13—18.

<sup>17</sup> § 14. St. Matt. ii. 19, 23.

### 38 *Earlier Mysteries of our Lord's Life.*

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but these prophecies themselves at least included humiliation and obscurity among the marks of the promised King of Whom they spoke. Then the silence is unbroken until the incident of the Tarrying in the Temple<sup>18</sup> adds the last gem, as we may say, to the crown of mysteries of which this part of our Lord's human Life is composed, and then the veil again falls, until we find Him at the age of thirty, St. Joseph no longer by His side, our Lady His only companion, while the call to penance, which has been sounding for some months throughout the land, reaches the circle of hills in which Nazareth is nestled, and the Saviour of the World at length goes forth on His mission of peace.

It is difficult to persuade ourselves that it is not by some strange accident that this is all that we know of the Thirty Years. But it is no accident, and we may even venture to say that, few as are the incidents of the history, it is yet complete in itself. The great acts of God which occupy these thirty years were in the spiritual order, and such acts do not strike the eye. They were carried out in the soul and body of the Incarnate God, in the souls of the highest saints of His kingdom, Mary and Joseph and John, they were the foundations of a new creation, the powers of which reached backwards to the very beginnings of human history, while the same powers are and will be active and energetic in the whole spiritual life of the Church in this world and in the next. Every one of these mysteries is in a true sense sacramental, and the counsel of God required them, and required no more than these at this stage of our Lord's work in the world. In them He touches the whole of human life, in them the whole universe, spiritual and material, does Him honour, in them all God's previous dealings with and mercies

<sup>18</sup> § 15. St. Luke ii. 40—52.



towards our race are summed up and ratified, and their fruit, as it were, laid at His feet. Within the truths of these mysteries Christian theology and contemplation may feed themselves for ever, and no part of their appointed heritage lies outside them or beyond them, and what is involved in and founded upon them. It is in this sense that we can discern the perfection of the work of God, and that it lies before us in all those main features which we are intended to contemplate, even in the short history of the Evangelists.

The same may be said as to another great head of instruction which is opened to us by the same mysteries. In this the virtues which our Lord practises, the hardships and humiliations which He chooses for Himself and for His Mother and St. Joseph, are considered as full of lessons to us, both as to our own practice and as to the necessity of His thus making amends to the honour of the Father for the constant disobedience, the love of riches, comfort, and independence, which have been the sources of so many sins on the part of those whom He came to redeem. The mysteries which follow are not less rich in this spiritual instruction. And they also contain a further revelation of the counsel of God in His arrangement of the dispensation of the Incarnation. The powers of the world at once show their instinctive hostility to the newborn King, Who has come to bless them and strengthen them by the elevation and amelioration of the whole human race, and by replacing society on its true foundations as the work of God. This hostility is to be met, not by legions of angels, or the miraculous exertion of the irresistible power of God. It is to be met by flight, the resource of weakness, by concealment, retirement, obscurity, insignificance. The Flight into Egypt, the Massacre of the Innocents, and the



long sojourn at Nazareth after the return to the Holy Land, are the mysteries upon which this lesson as to God's Providence is hung. For by far the greater part of His earthly sojourn our Lord is sanctifying common human life in the practice of domestic duties and virtues in the cottage and workshop at Nazareth. This long training in the Hidden Life is, however, once broken by the incident of the Tarrying in the Temple when our Lord was twelve years old—an incident which has been the source from which hundreds of thousands of His servants have derived the light and the strength by the aid of which they have followed Him in all the various higher vocations which rise above those common paths of duty, to sanctify which He bestowed so much loving labour in the thirty years which passed before His Public Life began. So wonderfully is our Lord's Life, in all its beautiful simplicity, arranged so as to be the foundation and the sanction of every vocation in which His children are to serve Him, that the Hidden Life at Nazareth has ever been looked upon as the pattern of religious observance as well as of domestic duty, while the example of the obedience which He there practised towards St. Joseph and our Blessed Lady comes to us blended with the lesson of the paramount rights of God, which is brought home to us by the scene in the Temple when He was of the age of twelve years.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *The Infancy and Hidden Life as related in the Gospels.*

THE full significance of all this chain of mysteries, the meaning of our Lord's example in each, the spiritual powers in which, as it may be said, each of them is still living and active, as well as other countless subjects for devout contemplation and prayer, which are suggested in relation to them by Christian theology and Catholic asceticism, must be left aside by us for the present. It is our business here to point out the relation of the Gospel narratives to the actual doings and incidents of this wonderful period of thirty years, during which the world went on its way as usual, with its God living in the midst of it, unknown, silent, active only in the sphere of the most intense spiritual energy. Strictly speaking, these most marvellous mysteries do not fall within the ordinary and absolutely essential limits of a Gospel, as the word was understood by those who were the first to use it in a Christian sense. We see this from the Gospel of St. Mark, which, though it was probably later as to the date of its composition than the Gospel of St. Matthew, is yet far more rudimentary and simple in character. A great veil seems to have hung over the origin of our Lord in the eyes of the people during His Life, and we do not find in the early speeches of the Apostles any attempt to give prominence to the truths which are in-

volved in His Birth of a Virgin at Bethlehem, in the witness of the Wise Kings, and the like. He was first manifested to the world at the age of thirty. He received Baptism at the hands of St. John, and began soon after to preach and collect disciples. This is the point at which St. Mark's narrative begins, in strict accordance with the conditions laid down by St. Peter, when, before the day of Pentecost, a new Apostle was to be chosen in the place of Judas, and with the words of the same St. Peter, when he described the Gospel message and witness in a few words to the first Gentile converts to the Church.<sup>1</sup> The Apostles had themselves been led by that teaching of the Father of which our Lord speaks more than once,<sup>2</sup> to their belief in the truth as to His Divine Person, and this was to be the foundation and beginning of the faith of all those to whom they addressed themselves.<sup>3</sup> The characteristic thought of St. Mark's Gospel, so to speak, may be said to be the proof of our Lord's Divinity by His miraculous works, and he begins his narrative at once with the Baptism and Temptation. When St. John wrote the fourth Gospel, the narratives of the mysteries of which we speak had already been filled up by the additions which St. Luke had made to the statements of St. Matthew. It is to these two last-named Evangelists, therefore, that we owe the whole of what is here considered as the first part of our Lord's Life, for the great passage with which St. John opens his Gospel, and which sums up so wonderfully the doctrine of His Divinity, belongs, it may be said, like that Divinity itself, to all time, and to every part of our Lord's earthly or heavenly Life. It gives the theology, strictly

<sup>1</sup> See Acts i. 21, 22; x. 37—41.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matt. xvi. 17; St. John vi. 44, 45.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the profession of the Ethiopian eunuch, after the instruction received from St. Philip (Acts viii. 37).

so called, which underlies the narratives of the particular mysteries and incidents which we owe, as has been said, to St. Matthew and St. Luke.

In considering, as to this part and all other subsequent parts of our Lord's Life, what has been inserted and what has been omitted by the several Evangelists respectively, we must continually bear in mind the conditions under which such insertions or omissions were made by them. They are not to be looked upon as writers of memoirs, who collect all that they can find, or relate all that they can remember. The purpose and method of each Evangelist are spoken of in another part of this work, and this is not the place for any full examination of such subjects. It is enough here to remind ourselves that what we find in the Gospels is properly to be considered as the matter relating to our Lord's Life which was selected for record on certain definite principles, by the authors, guided, as all Christians believe, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The mysteries of our Lord's Infancy and Hidden Life are such and so many as we have seen. It remains for us to endeavour to gather instruction and intelligence of His sacred actions, from the study of what has been selected out of the constellation of these mysteries by each of the two Evangelists before us.

The purpose of St. Matthew in what he has selected out of this part of the Gospel history is clearly far more controversial and argumentative than that of St. Luke. The great argument which the Apostles and their first followers urged upon the Jews was the fulfilment of the prophecies, and the importance of this argument in their minds is wonderfully evidenced in the first Gospel. St. Matthew takes a very large and deep view indeed of the prophetic preparation for our Lord.

To him the whole of Scripture and all the history of mankind, and especially of the chosen people, is one great prophecy of Jesus Christ. This truth involves a further truth—that of the many kinds and varieties of prophecy, which is at sometimes and in some cases more direct and formal than in others. The references in St. Matthew's Gospel to types and anticipations of incidents relating to our Lord's Person are sometimes tacit, and do not always lie on the surface. When he makes a direct application of a text, or of a series of texts, it is not always necessary that the words which he quotes, or to which he refers, should have no other more immediate reference than that which he draws from them. If the whole history of the chosen people, for instance, was ordered as it was ordered in reference to the Incarnation, then the calling of the Israelites out of Egypt, and the incidents which made the mothers of Rama wail for their children, were in themselves prophecies of our Lord.<sup>4</sup> But we must not here enlarge on the subject of St. Matthew's use of prophecy in its largest sense. It is enough to point out that those mysteries of our Lord's Childhood which he selects are introduced by him with the most direct purpose of eliciting from them instances of the argument from prophecy, which must have been so familiar to himself and the other Apostles in their first disputes with the Jews or their first instructions to Christians. Thus he passes by the Annunciation and Visitation to come at once to the trouble of St. Joseph, which was set at rest by the Angel, and which gives him occasion to introduce the prophecy of Isaias about the Virginal Conception and Childbearing, the fulfilment of which is made certain by the evidence of St. Joseph. Thus, again, he gives no account of our Lord's Nativity, but assumes it as known.

<sup>4</sup> St. Matt. ii. 15, 18, quoting Osee xi. 4, and Jerem. xxxviii. 15.  
 XXXI



He passes over the Circumcision and Purification, giving immediately the visit of the Three Kings and the testimony which they elicited from the highest Jewish authorities as to the place of our Lord's Birth. The sequel to the Epiphany is to him the fulfilment of two more prophecies, that of the wailing in Rama, and that of the call of God's Son out of Egypt, to which reference has just been made. In the same way St. Matthew seems to point to the dwelling at Nazareth chiefly as the fulfilment of that other chain of prophecies of various kinds, in which our Lord had been spoken of under the name Netser, or the Branch, and in which many particulars implying humiliation, hiddenness, and abjection are found blended with others that signify magnificence and power.<sup>5</sup> These prophecies he sums up in words which nowhere occur in any prophetic book—'He shall be called a Nazarene.'

It would certainly appear unintelligible in the writer of any ordinary memoir, to pass over, as St. Matthew has passed over, so many of the most conspicuous and important features of a long period like that of the Thirty Years, and to dwell on those alone which he has selected. The Annunciation has a higher theological and historical importance than the dream of St. Joseph, and the Flight into Egypt reveals less of our Lord's majesty or of the work which He came to do than the Presentation in the Temple. But those mysteries which St. Matthew has selected have the obvious advantage of clinching the argument from prophecy by the most irrefragable evi-

<sup>5</sup> The chief passage referred to seems to be Isaias xi. 1—10, which must be compared with ch. liii. 2 seq. The same image is used Jerem. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15, Zach. vi. 11, and is found at the very end of Sacred Scripture, Apoc. v. 5, xxii. 16. In some of these passages the Greek word ἀνατολή is used, in which the sense of 'upspringing' passes into that of 'dayspring,' and to this St. Zachary seems to allude in his canticle, St. Luke ii. 78.

dence, as that of St. Joseph witnessing to the virginal conception of our Lord, and that of the Jewish authorities themselves, as to the predicted place of His Birth, while the fact that His Birth had actually taken place there, or was believed to have taken place, was written in letters of blood on the memory of too many afflicted families in the neighbourhood to be easily effaced. In all these cases, even, it may be said, in the case of St. Joseph, the evidence to the fulfilment of the prophecy came from the very persons, who were, as it were, officially and personally bound to scrutinize it with the utmost rigour. The other two fulfilments of prophecy which St. Matthew selects are in some measure the natural sequels of the fear felt by St. Joseph of the cruelty of Herod and his family. They may perhaps also be considered as tacitly answering objections, which might at least have risen in the mind of devout Jews approaching the faith, on the score of the weakness and apparent defencelessness of our Blessed Lord in His Infancy, as also of the stigma which seems to have rested upon Him on account of His connection with Nazareth. The objection is entirely reversed when it is shown that the Flight into Egypt was the fulfilment of a type, and that it made it possible to apply to our Lord the words of the prophet as to the calling of Israel out of Egypt. The same remark may be made as to the other fulfilment, by virtue of which the ignominy which hung over Nazareth is shown to have been itself a prophetic mark attached of old to the promised Saviour of the world.

These may be considered as some of the more obvious reasons which may have guided St. Matthew in the selection which he has made from these earlier mysteries of our Lord's Life. There were, no doubt, many others. If his Gospel were compiled at the time to which it is usually attributed, and if, though then put together as a

whole, it is in the main composed of documents which had been put almost into their present form and used in the instruction of the Church at Jerusalem from the very beginning, it is not wonderful that so little should have been said of the greater mysteries of the Infancy, as to which our Blessed Lady herself, who was living in the midst of that early Church, was the great living authority and witness. For whatever reason, it is certain that St. Matthew seems purposely to avoid all mention of Jerusalem and anything which happened there until he comes to the narrative of the immediate prelude to the Passion. In this he is followed by St. Mark, and, except as to the incidents of the Infancy, by St. Luke. The three first Gospels are mainly Galilæan, except that St. Luke has devoted a very large portion of his work to incidents which happened in Judæa, though not in the holy city. It is St. John, the last of the four, who fills up the gap thus left. In by far the greater part of his Gospel the scene is laid in Jerusalem itself.

We find ourselves in a different atmosphere from that of St. Matthew's Gospel when we turn to the two long chapters in our arrangement which embrace what St. Luke has added to the history of our Lord's Infancy. The beautiful simplicity of the language of this part of his Gospel has often been noted, and if we ask ourselves from whom among all those who were 'eye-witnesses and ministers' of the matter St. Luke could have gained all those details, we can find no more natural answer rising to our lips than that we have here what may almost be called 'the Gospel of Mary.' We cannot imagine that St. Luke would have had recourse to any one other than to the Blessed Mother of God for the materials of his history, nor can we conceive that that gracious Lady would have refused the aid which she alone of mortals could afford in a matter so highly concerning the honour

of her Divine Son. If it be thought that St. Luke's Gospel must have been written at a time when our Lady was no longer living, or when the Evangelist could not have had recourse to her, we must remember that his materials, as in the case of St. Matthew, may have been gathered and used for instruction long before the whole Gospel was composed, and also that he may have derived them from her mediately as well as immediately. The more closely we examine the language and reflect on the substance of this precious part of the Gospel, the more likely does it seem that what we find there comes almost immediately from the Blessed Virgin herself. The narratives of the Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Purification, and of the Tarrying and Finding in the Temple, seem almost to speak in her person, of whom it is said more than once that she kept all these sayings in her heart. If the tradition about her having been brought up in the Temple before her Espousals be accepted as true, she may have been present there at the time of the appearance of the Angel to St. Zachary, which was at least six months before the Annunciation. The account of Zachary coming out from the inclosure in which the altar of incense stood, is like the account of an eye-witness. It may be that our Lady was not present at the birth and circumcision of St. John, but the details of what then took place would naturally have been furnished to her by St. Elisabeth, and they supply the fulfilment of the prediction of the Angel at the time of the vision of St. Zachary. The visit of the shepherds to Bethlehem, the scene in the Temple at the Purification, and that other scene, twelve years later, when the first fulfilment of the prophecy of Simeon took place, are all circumstances on which our Blessed Lady's contemplative love would linger and dwell. The fondness with which the narrative seems to



cling to the Temple, and the magnificent contemplations on the attributes of God and the ways of His Providence, which are contained in the Canticles which are here given, are all, if we do not mistake, revelations of the thoughts on which the Heart of Mary was continually occupied. There are even expressions which are more likely to have been used by our Lady than any one else, as when it is said that our Lord's 'father and mother' wondered at the things which were said concerning Him;<sup>6</sup> and again, that 'His parents'<sup>7</sup> went up every year to Jerusalem at the solemn feast of the Pasch. Such seems to have been the ordinary familiar language of the Holy Home at Nazareth.<sup>8</sup>

It is natural to observe the contrast between the tone of the two Evangelists of whom we are speaking in their respective narratives of scenes of our Lord's Infancy. St. Matthew, as has been said, seems to select those incidents which are most serviceable to his purpose of vindicating our Lord's claims by the evidence of fulfilled prophecy. The omission of any direct account of the Nativity, or of the Purification, may be easily explained in this way, as well as the silence in which he passes over the greater part of the thirty years which were spent at Nazareth. On the other hand, the narrative of St. Luke flows on calmly and sweetly, as if he had no other purpose in view than simply to relate what had happened, although it would not have been difficult for him to name the prophecies which were fulfilled in the

<sup>6</sup> St. Luke ii. 33. Cf. verse 48: '*Thy father* and I have sought Thee sorrowing.'

<sup>7</sup> St. Luke ii. 41.

<sup>8</sup> It may be added that Nazareth is called 'their own city,' at the end of the narrative of the Purification (c. ii. 39). Strictly speaking, it seems to have been our Blessed Lady's 'own city,' while St. Joseph belonged to Bethlehem.



mysteries of which he speaks. The words of the Archangel Gabriel, indeed, both to St. Zachary and to our Blessed Lady, are full of Scriptural and propheticall allusions, and in one instance in each case are direct citations from Scripture, which bring to mind great personal prophecies in relation to the events which he was sent to announce. The faithfulness of God in fulfilling His promises made to the fathers, or to His servants, is the subject of direct thanksgiving and praise in all the three Canticles which are inserted in this part of St. Luke. This direct mention of prophecy and promise by our Lady, St. Zachary, and holy Simeon, is a proof of the large space which they filled in the minds of the devout servants of God at that time. But there is no attempt in the narrative itself to call attention to the manifold fulfilments of prophecy which were to be discerned in the mysteries of the Childhood. The Gospel seems to be addressed to quiet Christian contemplation, the attitude of mind of which our Lady is the pre-eminent mistress and example, rather than to be a manual of arguments of various kinds, all of which tend to prove that our Lord was the Christ. No doubt, St. Matthew's Gospel was meant to be far more than such a manual. But the selection of its incidents seems nowhere more directly guided by such a purpose than in its few opening chapters.

If we turn now to the omissions in St. Luke, and ask why he has given us no account of the hesitation of St. Joseph, or of the coming of the Wise Kings, or of the Flight into Egypt, we are naturally led to a consideration to which we shall have repeatedly to refer as a principle in the explanation of similar features in his Gospel. It would require a very great strain of imagination indeed to suppose that the Evangelist himself was ignorant of these things, and, if we are to suppose

what is on so many grounds most natural, that our Blessed Lady was his ultimate authority in this part of the Gospel, it is certainly an absolute impossibility that she can have been ignorant of these occurrences. We shall find the same difficulty as to the hypothesis of ignorance in numberless other cases where this Evangelist has omitted what has been related by St. Matthew. There is no other way of accounting for these omissions, in general, than the very simple principle that, as a rule, St. Luke does not, in the words of St. Paul, 'build on another man's foundation,' and that he purposely turns aside, in general, from the relation of what has already been selected by the Evangelists who preceded him. The turn of his mind and the characteristic tone of his Gospel lead him naturally, indeed, to rest on the mysteries and incidents and discourses which he has related, with a tender and solemn gaze of his own. But, as we see in several instances, in which the requirements of his duty as an Evangelist have made it right for him to relate what has already been related by others, he is quite as much himself, quite as distinct and unique in the light which he throws upon his own side of incidents common to all the four, or to him with St. Mark or St. Matthew, as he is when he is narrating what the others have omitted. He could have given a history of his own of the coming of the Kings or of the Flight into Egypt, if it had been to his purpose, and the affliction of the mothers of Bethlehem could have been painted by him with as much touching simplicity as that of the widow of Nain. There is a most beautiful and refined modesty about the whole of his Gospel, an echo, as it were, of that intense humility of our Blessed Lady which breathes in the two opening chapters. This modesty or reserve shows itself in the quiet, unobtrusive manner in which he supplies what had been omitted in

the narrative of St. Matthew, as well as in his forbearance from all allusion to what his predecessor had said, while at the same time he leaves in absolute silence the history as it stands.

The same great and characteristic modesty of the third Evangelist is probably the cause of his silence as to points where his narrative might seem at first sight either to correct or to run counter to that of others. Here, however, we must take into consideration the danger of transferring the common habits of thought of times like our own to the very different habits of generations so far removed from us in so many ways as that to which the Evangelists belonged. We live in the midst of a multitudinous literature, of which the most rare and costly productions are more within the reach of every one, than was the case with the commonest books in the time of the early Church. The writer of any book on any subject has not only to make himself acquainted with the works of others on that subject, but he must expect also that his own readers are acquainted with them as well as himself. He must thus take note of points of collision or contact; at least, even if he resolves, for reasons of his own, to decline controversy, he cannot let himself seem to contradict writers whom he holds in reverence without affording his readers the means of explaining the apparent difficulty for themselves. But the age in which the Evangelists lived and wrote was no age for foot-notes, or illustrations, or dissertations appended to the text. The need for these things had not been created by the multiplicity of books and the general habit of reading. In the case of the Evangelists, it seems impossible to suppose that those who wrote last were ignorant either of the existence of the works of those who wrote first, or of the authoritative character which raised them so far above ordinary writings

St. Peter speaks of St. Paul's Epistles as Scripture,<sup>9</sup> and we can hardly imagine that St. Luke or St. John would have shown less respect to the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark than St. Peter showed to St. Paul's Epistles. But each Evangelist addressed an audience of his own, few of whom, comparatively speaking, could compare his statements with those of his compeers, and still fewer of whom could have had any inclination to detect seeming discrepancies which did not lie on the surface. In such a case, even in a time like ours, few writers would go out of their way to give explanations, and, as has been said, such explanations would have been altogether strange and unprecedented in the times of which we are speaking.

It may thus be unnecessary to attribute to any especial reserve or reticence on the part of a writer like St. Luke the feature in his Gospel to which we allude, which consists in this, that he makes no reference to the former narratives while at the same time he leads his own readers along a different path. The most distinct references to possible questions which can be discerned in his Gospel are such as his pointed statement about the taxing under Cyrenius, or as to the 'fifteenth year' of the reign of Tiberius.<sup>10</sup> He may there be supposed to be giving a positive decision of his own as to matters as to which controversy had arisen or might arise. Elsewhere, where he departs from the narrative of St. Matthew, he gives no sign or note of an explanation of what might be a possible difficulty. We say that, as to this, it may be unnecessary to point to his singular modesty as the cause of his silence. But though this is perhaps unnecessary, his reticence is so entirely in keeping with this feature of his character that we cannot be wrong in saying that his modesty is at least illustrated by it.

<sup>9</sup> 2 St. Peter iii. 16.

<sup>10</sup> St. Luke ii. 2 ; iii. 1.



He gives his own narrative simply, and there leaves it, as it were, to fit itself in to the other statements which have already been made as to the same subjects or incidents.

The most notable instance of this silence on the part of St. Luke in that part of the Gospel history on which we are engaged, is concerned with a question which has been much debated among Harmonists, and on which it is now necessary to make a few remarks. The chronological questions which have to be dealt with by writers who undertake to comment on our Lord's Life as a whole are of two kinds, which we may speak of as external and internal. By external questions we mean those which have to deal with the relation of the Gospel history to that of the world at large, as for instance, the date of the Birth, or Baptism, or death of our Lord in the lists of the Roman consulates or Empires, or of the Greek Olympiads. The dates, for instance, which St. Luke intended to fix in the places lately referred to, bring the whole history of our Lord in direct connection with secular history on the assertion of the Evangelist himself. In so far as it is a point of necessity to meet any difficulties which may thus arise, these external questions are of importance to the student of the Gospel history. But more immediately important are those which may be called internal, such, for instance, as that of the length of time during which our Lord preached, or that as to the number of Paschs celebrated during His Ministry, or the date with reference to His Passion at which that Ministry began in Galilee, and the like. If these questions are not fairly met, the history becomes a confusion and an uncertainty. If they are sufficiently answered, the history remains complete and orderly in itself, though it may still have to be adapted to the chronology of the world or to the annals of Tiberius.



It is a question of this latter kind which has arisen in consequence, as may fairly be said, of the silent manner in which the Evangelists leave their statements without reference or explanation. The question relates to the place of the Epiphany in the order of the mysteries of the Holy Infancy. St. Matthew's account of the Epiphany is not precise as to the time at which it occurred. But it seems to be quite clear as to the place, and we have therefore to conclude that the Holy Family were at that time resident at Bethlehem. Bethlehem is the place named by the Jewish authorities as the birth-place of the Christ, in answer to the inquiries of Herod. Bethlehem is the place on which the cruel vengeance of Herod falls after he discovers that he has been played with by the Wise Kings. Bethlehem is the place to which, as it appears, St. Joseph would naturally have returned when he came back from Egypt, if he had not been deterred by the news that Archelaus was on the throne of his father. It is only possible to suppose that the Epiphany took place elsewhere, by imagining that when the Wise Kings set out from Jerusalem on the way to Bethlehem the star appeared and led them to some other spot while they thought they were going thither.

On the other hand, the narrative of St. Luke, which makes no mention at all of the Epiphany—though we cannot suppose that St. Luke was ignorant of it—tells us that on the fortieth day after our Lord's Birth, He was taken to Jerusalem to be presented in the Temple, as also that the Purification of His Blessed Mother might be accomplished, and that after that mystery they 'returned to Galilee to their own city Nazareth.' A difficulty therefore arises, on which so much argument has been spent, as to make it quite useless to attempt to epitomize what has been said. The only important

question refers to the order of the mysteries, and is not difficult to settle if we keep to the principle of accepting all the positive statements of the Evangelists, and not allowing ourselves to be led away by arguments from their silence. It is clear from St. Luke that after the Purification the Holy Family returned to Nazareth. It is clear from St. Matthew that the Wise Kings found them at Bethlehem. There is a very strong improbability indeed in the supposition that the visit of the Wise Kings, the Flight into Egypt, and the return to the Holy Land, took place within the forty days before the Purification. If that be supposed possible, there would still be the difficulty to be met which is contained in St. Matthew's direct statement that St. Joseph was afraid to go into Judæa on his return. If he were afraid to go into Judæa, much more would he have been afraid to enter the Temple for the Purification. It remains, therefore, almost inevitable to place the visit of the Kings after the Purification. At what distance of time is it to be placed from the Nativity, we have little direct means of judging. Some have supposed that after the Purification there was a short sojourn at Bethlehem, and that in that interval the Kings arrived. This, however, seems hardly to respect the statement of St. Luke as to the return to Nazareth. The Evangelist may have had reasons, as has been already said, for omitting all mention of the Epiphany and of the Flight. But if those mysteries took place immediately after the return from the Purification, and before the departure for Nazareth—which, in this hypothesis, was not made until after the return from Egypt—it is difficult to see how St. Luke could have used the words which occur in his text as to that departure. The departure is as distinct an incident in his narrative as the going up to the Temple itself, and it is directly connected with it.

It appears therefore necessary, in order to give full weight to the statement which must have been deliberately made by St. Luke, to conclude that the Holy Family returned to Nazareth before the visit of the Kings.

In that case, they must at a subsequent date have taken up their abode at Bethlehem. Here we come across an instance of the necessity of remembering that the Evangelists are not to be judged or understood as writers of the present day. In the present day, a writer like St. Luke, following a writer like St. Matthew, would probably add a word or note of explanation, saying that at a later point in the history the Holy Family returned to Bethlehem, and there received the visit of the Kings, as has been related by St. Matthew. It may be questioned whether any writer of St. Luke's age would have done this; but if a secular historian might have done it, it would certainly not have been done by an Evangelist. It is altogether unreasonable to expect it of St. Luke. He was going to omit the whole story of the Kings, the Flight into Egypt, and the return from thence, and it would have been entirely out of character in him to have referred to the place at which the Epiphany occurred. It may be that if he had done so, anti-Christian writers in our time would certainly have marked the note as manifestly spurious, and stigmatized its insertion as a clumsy attempt on the part of some early transcriber to put the narratives of the two Evangelists in harmony. But the omission of any note of the kind in the later of the two Gospels before us, is absolutely of no weight at all as an argument against the natural hypothesis that, inasmuch as the Kings found our Lord at Bethlehem, at a time which is evidently later than the Purification and the return to Galilee which followed after that mystery, the Holy Family must

in the meantime have begun to reside, either permanently or for a time, at Bethlehem.

This supposition may also be said to have a foundation in the Gospel itself. For it is certainly implied by St. Matthew's language, that if St. Joseph had not been deterred by the fear of Archelaus, he would have gone to Bethlehem rather than to Nazareth on his return from Egypt. The words to which we refer seem to have no other purpose than to inform us, incidentally, of the reason why our Lord was brought up in Galilee instead of in the city of David, where He had been born. This is quite in harmony with the supposition that before he was in any fear either of Herod or of Archelaus, St. Joseph had moved his residence from Galilee. St. Matthew could have had no reason for mentioning this change, for he had up to that point in his narrative said nothing at all about Nazareth. But there is evidently in his mind the thought that the change of residence from Bethlehem, the natural abode of the King of the Jews, required some kind of explanation.

It remains to fix, if that be possible, the time of the visit of the Kings, who found our Lord at Bethlehem. A considerable part of the difficulty here arises from the circumstance that, from early times, the feast of the Epiphany has been celebrated, as now, on the twelfth day after Christmas Day. This custom fixes in our minds the idea that the visit of the Kings took place at a like interval of time after our Lord's actual birth, and thus before the Purification. But it is far from certain that the dates at which the great mysteries of our Lord are usually celebrated were originally fixed, in all cases, on account of any very constant tradition. Again, even if this were the case, the date so fixed would only signify the anniversary of the mystery celebrated on a particular day. It would not of necessity fix the distance



in point of time between one actual occurrence and another. If the visit of the Kings were a year and twelve days after the Nativity, its anniversary would be on the same day as if the interval were either twelve days only, or two years and twelve days. The longer intervals here named are more in accordance with the sacred text than the shortest of the three. It is certain that St. Matthew tells us that Herod 'diligently inquired' as to the time of the appearance of the star, and that when he afterwards ordered the massacre of all children 'from two years old and under,' the limit of age was fixed in consequence of the information which the Kings had given. It is therefore natural to suppose that the star had been seen a year and some months before the Epiphany. This calculation gives the shortest allowance of time to the 'two years and under,' reckoning as children of two years those who had already lived more than one. The star must have been seen either at the time of the Annunciation or at that of the Nativity, but most probably at the latter date. If this was so, then the interval of twelve days from the Nativity is far too little, because it would not be in accordance with the information given to Herod by the Kings. But it would be too little, even if the appearance of the star be dated at the Annunciation. It is therefore fair to say that the words of Scripture justify us in supposing that the visit of the Kings took place at least some months after our Lord's Birth, and there would thus have been abundance of time for the Holy Family to return to Bethlehem from Galilee after the Purification.

It is hardly necessary to say anything more in explanation of the omission of all reference to the Hidden Life of our Lord in all the Gospels except that of St. Luke, in which, as has already been remarked, the silence is broken only as to the Tarrying in the Temple



when our Lord was twelve years old. The Hidden Life of our Lord is revealed to us sufficiently, for the purposes of God's Providence, in the few sentences in which it is summed up by St. Luke. Those few sentences hint to us the inconceivable blessedness of our Lady and St. Joseph, and the great virtues practised by our Lord in that wonderful period. They furnish an almost inexhaustible store for contemplation, as well as a lesson the teaching of which presses upon us at every hour of our lives. By saying no more than they do say, the Evangelists also teach us to expect the same reticence as to the same subjects in the remainder of their narratives. We shall find them speaking but very seldom of our Blessed Lady, and that, with the exception of St. John, only incidentally. When she does appear in the narrative, it will be with an obvious purpose, and, in the last Gospel, on occasions which are especially significant as involving great truths as to her position in the kingdom of her Son. All the time of the three years of the Ministry she was probably almost as near our Lord, except occasionally, as during the Thirty Years at Nazareth; but neither in the one case nor in the other do the historians penetrate into the secrecy in which her intercourse with her Son is carried on.

## CHAPTER V.

### *Harmony of the Gospels as to the First Part of the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

#### § 1.—*Preface of St. Luke.*

St. Luke i. 1—4.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a narration of the things that have been accomplished among us, according as they have delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having diligently attained to all things from the beginning, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mayest know the truth of those words in which thou hast been instructed.

#### § 2.—*The Divine and Eternal generation of Christ.*

St. John i. 1—18.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

St. John i. 2—11.

God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men, and the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the Light, but was to bear witness of the Light. That was the true Light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His

St. John i. 11—18.

own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in His name, who are born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John beareth witness of Him; and crieth out, saying, This was He of Whom I spoke, He that shall come after me is preferred before me, because He was before me. And of His fulness we all have received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.

§ 3.—*The Conception of St. John, the forerunner of our Lord.*

St. Luke i. 5—25.

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zachary, of the course of Abia, and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name Elisabeth. And they were both just before God, walking in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord without blame. And they had no son, for that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were well advanced in years.

And it came to pass, that while he executed the priestly office before God, in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priestly office, it was his lot to offer incense, going into the temple of the Lord. And all the multitude of the people was praying without at the hour of incense.

And there appeared to him an Angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zachary, seeing him, was

St. Luke i. 13—19.

troubled, and fear fell upon him.

But the Angel said to him, Fear not, Zachary, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great before the Lord, and shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb, and he shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God: and he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, 'that he may turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,'<sup>1</sup> and the incredulous to the wisdom of the just, to prepare for the Lord a perfect people.

And Zachary said to the Angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.

And the Angel, answering, said to him, I am Gabriel,

St. Luke i. 19—25.

who stand before God, and am sent to speak to thee, and to bring thee these good tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be able to speak until the day wherein these things shall come to pass, because thou hast not believed my words, which shall be fulfilled in their time.

And the people were waiting for Zachary, and they wondered that he staid so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak to them, and they understood that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he made signs to them, and remained dumb. And it came to pass, after the days of his office were accomplished, that he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein He hath had regard to take away my reproach among men.

<sup>1</sup> Mal. iv. 6 (in the prophecy of the coming of Elias).

§ 4.—*The Conception of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

St. Luke i. 26—38.

And in the sixth month, the Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the name of the virgin was Mary. And the Angel, being come in, said to her, Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, Blessed art thou among women. And when she had heard, she was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be.

And the Angel said to her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God, Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His father, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And

St. Luke i. 33—38.

of His kingdom there shall be no end.

And Mary said to the Angel, How shall this be done, because I know not man?

And the Angel, answering said to her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren, 'Because no word shall be impossible with God.'<sup>2</sup>

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word. And the Angel departed from her.

§ 5.—*The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

St. Luke i. 39—56.

And Mary, rising up in those days, went into the mountainous country with

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xviii. 14 (said to Sara in the prophecy of the conception of Isaac).



St. Luke i. 40—48.

haste, into a city of Juda, and she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elisabeth.

And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb: and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and she cried out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord.

And Mary said: My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour:

Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid, for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

St. Luke i. 49—56.

For He that is mighty hath done great things to me, and holy is His name.

And His mercy is from generation to generations, to them that fear Him.

He hath showed might in His arm, He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble.

He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He hath received Israel His servant, being mindful of His mercy. As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever.

And Mary abode with her about three months, and she returned to her own house.

§ 6.—*The revelation made to St. Joseph by the Angel.*

St. Matt. i. 18—25.

Now the birth of Christ was thus: When Mary His mother was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost:

St. Matt. i. 19—25.

whereupon Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying, Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.

Now all this was done that the word might be fulfilled, which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us.<sup>3</sup>

And Joseph, rising up from sleep, did as the Angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took unto him his wife. And he knew her not till she brought forth her first-born Son : and he called His name Jesus.

§ 7.—*The Nativity of St. John the Forerunner of our Lord.*

St. Luke i. 57—80.

Now Elisabeth's full time of being delivered was come, and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and kinsfolks heard that the Lord had showed his great mercy toward her, and they congratulated with her.

And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they called him by his father's name Zachary. And his mother, answering, said, Not so, but he shall be called John. And they said to her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And demanding a table-book, he wrote, saying, John is his name. And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came upon all their neighbours, and all these words were divulged over all the mountainous country of Judæa. And all they who

<sup>3</sup> Isaias vii. 14.

St. Luke i. 67—76.

had heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, What a one, think ye, shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him.

And Zachary his father was filled with the Holy Ghost, and he prophesied, saying : Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people :

And hath raised up a horn of salvation to us, in the house of David His servant.

As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who are from the beginning :

Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us :

To show mercy to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant.

The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, that He would grant to us :

That being delivered from the hand of our enemies, we may serve Him without fear,

In holiness and justice before him, all our days.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the

St. Luke i. 77—80.

Most High, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare His way :

To give knowledge of salvation to His people, unto the remission of their sins,

Through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us :

To enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet into the way of peace.

And the child grew up, and was strengthened in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his manifestation to Israel.

§ 8.—*The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

St. Luke ii. 1—7.

And it came to pass that in those days there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrenus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of

St. Luke ii. 5—7.

Nazareth into Judæa, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child.

And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

### § 9.—*The Shepherds.*

St. Luke ii. 8—20.

And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night-watches over their flock. And, behold, an Angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them, and they feared with a great fear.

And the Angel said to them, Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people: for this day is

St. Luke ii. 12—19.

born to you a Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you, you shall find the Infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.

And it came to pass, that after the Angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us. And they came with haste, and they found Mary and Joseph, and the Infant lying in a manger. And seeing, they understood of the word that had been spoken to them concerning this Child. And all they that heard wondered, and at those things that were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.



St. Luke ii. 20.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God, for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

§ 10.—*The Circumcision.  
The Name of Jesus.*

St. Luke ii. 21.

And after eight days were accomplished, that the Child should be circumcised, His name was called Jesus, which was called by the Angel, before He was conceived in the womb.

§ 11.—*The Purification of  
our Lady, and Presentation  
of the Child Jesus.*

St. Luke ii. 22—39.

And after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord. As it is written in the law of the Lord,<sup>4</sup> That every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord : and to offer a sacrifice, according as it is written in the law of the Lord, a pair

St. Luke ii. 25—33.

of turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was in him. And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when His parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he also took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said :

Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace :

Because my eyes have seen Thy salvation,

Which Thou hast prepared, before the face of all people :

A light to the revelation of the gentiles, and the glory of Thy people of Israel.

And His father and mother were wondering at these

<sup>4</sup> Exodus xiii. 2 ; Levit. v. 11.



St. Luke ii. 34—39.

things, which were spoken concerning Him :

And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother : Behold, this Child is set for the ruin, and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted, and thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed.

And there was a prophetess called Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser : she was far advanced in years, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity. And she was a widow until fourscore and four years, who departed not from the temple, by fastings and prayers serving night and day. Now she, at the same hour, coming in, gave praise to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel.

And after they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

§ 12.—*The Three Wise Kings.*

St. Matt. ii. 1—12.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and we are come to adore Him.

And Herod the king hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And assembling together all the chief priests, and the Scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. But they said to him, In Bethlehem of Juda : for so it is written by the prophet. And thou, Bethlehem, the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda : for out of thee shall come forth the ruler, who shall rule my people Israel.<sup>5</sup>

Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, inquired of them diligently the time of the star's appearing to them : And sending them into Bethlehem, said, Go, and search

<sup>5</sup> Micheas v. 2.

St. Matt. ii. 9—12.

diligently after the Child, and when you have found Him, bring me word again, that I also may come and adore Him.

And when they had heard the king, they went their way, and behold, the star, which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the Child was. And, seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And going into the house, they found the Child with Mary His mother, and falling down, they adored Him, and opening their treasures, they offered to Him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having received an answer in sleep, that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their own country.

§ 13.—*The Flight into Egypt. The Massacre of the Innocents.*

St. Matt. ii. 13—18.

And when they were departed, behold, an Angel of

St. Matt. ii. 14—18.

the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying, Arise, and take the Child and His mother, and fly into Egypt, and be there until I shall tell thee. For it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child, to destroy Him.

Who rising up, took the Child and His mother by night, and retired into Egypt. And he was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son.<sup>6</sup>

Then Herod, perceiving that he was deluded by the wise men, was exceeding angry, and, sending, killed all the men-children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the confines thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation and great mourning, Rachel bewailing

<sup>6</sup> Osee xi. 1.

St. Matt. ii. 18.

her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.<sup>7</sup>

§ 14.—*The return from Egypt.*

St. Matt. ii. 19—23.

Now Herod being dead, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph in Egypt, saying : Rise, and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead, who sought the life of the Child. Who, rising up, took the Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But hearing that Archelaus reigned in Judæa in the room of Herod his father, he was afraid to go thither, and being warned in sleep, he retired into the parts of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled, what was said by the prophets, that He shall be called a Nazarene.

§ 15.—*The Child Jesus remains in Jerusalem.*

St. Luke ii. 40—52.

And the Child grew, and waxed strong, full of wisdom, and the grace of God was in Him.

And His parents went every year to Jerusalem, at the solemn day of the pasch. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, according to the custom of the feast. And after they had fulfilled the days, when they returned, the Child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and His parents knew it not. And thinking that He was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought Him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance. And not finding Him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking Him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His wisdom and His answers.

<sup>7</sup> Jer. xxxi. 15.

St. Luke ii. 48—50.

St. Luke ii. 51, 52.

And seeing Him, they wondered. And His mother said to Him, Son, why hast Thou done so to us? behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. And He said to them : How is it that you sought Me? did you not know that I must be about the things that are My Father's? And they under-

stood not the word that He spoke unto them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And His mother kept all these words in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *First period of our Lord's Public Life.*

As we pass on in order of time to the successive stages of our Lord's Life, we find the amount and minuteness of details which are furnished to us by the Evangelists almost uniformly increasing. We have seen how few are the great events and mysteries which mark the long period of thirty years between the Annunciation and the end of the Hidden Life. When we begin what, as has been said, is in the proper sense of the term, as it was first understood, the Gospel history, we seem at once to find a comparative abundance in the materials which lie before us. This abundance goes on increasing, it may be said, as the periods into which the Life is divided become shorter. We know far more of the year and a half, more or less, which passed between the beginning of St. John Baptist's ministry and the first outbreak of persecution against our Lord, than of the whole thirty years before. Yet this first period is less rich in detail than that which immediately follows it, embracing rather more than a year, up to the Confession of St. Peter. Less than a year ensued between that Confession and Palm Sunday, yet as to this period we have still more abundant information as to the sayings and doings of our Blessed Lord. Holy Week and the history of the Passion, again, fill a very much larger space in the Evangelical records than any similar period of time which preceded them. In the Passion, in particular, we seem to trace hour after hour the unfolding of the marvellous counsels of God. It seems as if we could



hardly imagine that anything important of what then passed has been veiled in silence.

The importance of the ministry of St. John Baptist, as the ordained introduction and prelude to that of our Lord Himself, has been already clearly established by the prominence which is given to St. John, and to the circumstances of his conception and birth, in the narrative of St. Luke. There are also several references to his ministry in the Acts, which show how completely its importance was recognized by the Apostles.<sup>1</sup> The three first Evangelists give us, each in his own way, an account of the preaching of St. John, his Baptism, his anticipatory witness to our Lord, and our Lord's baptism by him.<sup>2</sup> These events are thus recognized as the formal preliminaries and foundations of our Lord's own Ministry. The preaching of St. John may have lasted, altogether, nearly a year, and it was more than half past when our Lord came to be baptized. Its object was that described in the prophetic words applied to it by St. John himself in his answer to the Pharisees,<sup>3</sup> and by the three first Evangelists, as well as by the angel who announced his future birth to his father, and by his father himself in his canticle as given by St. Luke. The leading idea in all that is said of him is 'the preparation of the ways of the Lord.' This idea is most fully developed, as is natural; in the poetical outburst of St. Zachary.

Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord,  
To prepare His ways,  
To give knowledge of salvation to His people,  
Unto the remission of their sins,  
Through the bowels of the mercy of our God,  
In which the Orient from on high hath visited us,  
To enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
To direct our feet into the way of peace.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Acts i. 22; x. 37; xi. 16; xiii. 24, 25; xviii. 25; xix. 3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> § 16. St. Matt. iii. 1-13; St. Mark i. 1-8; St. Luke iii. 1-18.

<sup>3</sup> St. John i. 23.

<sup>4</sup> St. Luke i. 76 seq.

After thirty years of training in the desert, St. John appeared to prepare the way for our Lord by the preaching of repentance. For in all seasons of grace, whenever there is to be an outpouring of God's spiritual bounties of unusual magnificence, the great impediment to the reception of the gift lies in the sins of men. It matters little whether the distinctive character of the gift be that it be one of light or one of strength—light to the mind or strength to the will. In either case sin is the hindrance, because, as our Lord afterwards said to Nicodemus, men do not come to the light, and they love darkness rather than light, because of their evil deeds. 'Repent ye, and do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' The call went like a strong fresh breeze from one end of the land to the other. St. John's chief external warrants for his mission were the austerity of his life and the winning holiness of his character. But the power of his call lay in the sense of need which pervaded all consciences, the instinctive thirst for forgiveness, light, grace, restoration, hope for the future, which few human hearts have ever entirely overmastered. The grace of God worked wonderfully in the souls of men to bring them to his feet. This may have been one reason why he wrought no miracles. The Evangelists especially mention Judæa, Jerusalem, and the country about the Jordan, as having been moved by St. John's preaching. We have evidence in the Apostles themselves that it was not without its effect even upon the more distant Galilæans. The Gospels describe a movement almost universal, and we are told that many even of the more religious classes, the ecclesiastics who stood the highest in the popular esteem, went out to him like the rest, though theirs was the class in which he had comparatively the fewest disciples, the class which, as our Lord once pointed out, had as such rejected him.

For every such call as his is a trial to hearts, and as the holy Simeon had prophesied to our Lady that the contradiction which would be offered to our Lord would be on account of the 'revelation of the hearts of many,' so now it was as to the ministry of His Forerunner. The rejection of our Lord by the ecclesiastical authorities was already foreshadowed in their neglect or dislike of the preacher of penance. As they treated St. John, so were they to treat Him before Whose face he was sent.

St. John's penitents confessed their sins and were baptized, according to the rite not uncommon among the Jews, the special signification of which varied according to the intention with which it was used, which in this case was the profession of the state of penitence after sin, and of hope and faith in the coming Messiah of whom St. John spoke. This was the second part of his office, to point out our Lord after people had been prepared to receive Him by the humiliation of confession and baptism. The movement had been continued for half a year or so when our Lord Himself left Nazareth, about His own thirtieth birthday, and presented Himself to receive at the hands of St. John the baptism of penance.<sup>5</sup>

St. John had had an intimation given to him that the promised 'Baptizer in the Holy Ghost,' for Whom he was to prepare the way would be made known to him by a special sign. He was to see the Holy Ghost descending and abiding upon Him. The sign had not been given when our Lord came to him on the banks of the Jordan. In this sense, then, He was as yet unknown to St. John, that is, the divinely appointed sign had not been given in His case.<sup>6</sup> But St. John in other ways knew our Lord. It matters little whether

<sup>5</sup> § 17. St. Matt. iii. 13—17; St. Mark i. 9—11; St. Luke iii. 21—23.

<sup>6</sup> St. John i. 30—31.

this knowledge had been fostered from the earliest years of the two Children by that constant intercourse between their families on which Christian art has so often loved to linger. St. John, as we know from the mystery of the Visitation, knew our Lord while yet unborn, and while he was himself also still in the womb of his mother, and it is impossible to suppose that his spiritual intelligence as to the Divine Presence enshrined in that Sacred Manhood was greater when he was an infant than now, when he had been sent forth with the express commission to make Him known to the world at large.

The contest of humility, if we may so speak, between our Lord and St. John is related by St. Matthew, and the main features of the great mystery of our Lord's Baptism are given by each of the three first Evangelists. We need not dwell here on the manifestation of the Three Divine Persons which now took place, nor on what we may call the sacramental effects of this mystery considered as the foundation of Christian baptism, in which regeneration, the imparting of a new nature, is wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, in which we are made the children of God, and share that Sonship of our Lord's which was here solemnly proclaimed, and in which the heavens are not simply laid open to us, but a right moreover of citizenship in that blessed country is conferred upon us as members of our Lord to Whom it belongs by inheritance. The Fathers also dwell on the sanctification of the element of water by our Lord's touch, which has made it the external and material part in the great Sacrament of our new Birth. They also bid us remark on the law of the Providence of the Father, according to which exaltation waits upon self-humiliation, and humiliation is the fit preparation of the reception of a great dignity. This law they see exemplified in the



humiliation of our Lord, Who now took on Himself the condition and state of an actual sinner—for such were those who approached the baptism of St. John—and in the magnificent declaration from heaven as to His dignity and office which followed on His Baptism.

It seems that the great mystery of the Fasting and Temptation followed immediately on the Baptism.<sup>7</sup> It took place on the lonely mountain track not far from Jericho, where the Jordan makes its way towards the Dead Sea. We here meet with an event of the highest spiritual importance, the effects of which are felt throughout all time and by all those who share either of the two natures, human and diabolical, which there met in conflict as they had met before in Paradise, when the victory had been on the side which was now to be in turn defeated, a victory which had enslaved mankind as our Lord's victory was now to deliver them. And now for the first time is an event related such as could have had no human witness, and which could only have become known to the Church from our Lord's own mouth or by revelation of the Holy Ghost. We learn, therefore, at once the importance of this mystery, and also that it is not beyond the range of the New Testament Scriptures to relate such events, few though there are, comparatively, which are actually so related.

Both the Fasting and the Temptation of our Lord mark stages of great moment in the execution of His great office of Redeemer and of Founder of the New Kingdom, and in the manifestation of His dignity and power both to angels and men. It seems to have been just at the time when the final temptations of Satan were presented to our Lord in the wild solitude of Quarantana, that a formal interrogation as to his own person and office was made to St. John Baptist where he was still

<sup>7</sup> § 18. St. Matt. iv. 1—11; St. Mark i. 12, 13; St. Luke iv. 1—13.



teaching and baptizing by the Jordan.<sup>8</sup> The ecclesiastical rulers at Jerusalem had kept themselves in reserve as to the extraordinary movement created by the preaching of St. John, to which in general they paid no heed themselves. There may have been many among them of innocent and strict lives, but as a rule they were the victims of that hardness of heart which pride and ambition engender in any ministers of religion whom they infect. It may have seemed a little thing not to join in the general movement to penance which had been called into life by the preaching of the Baptist, but it was the logical beginning of a course of conduct which led them at last, in the worst meaning of the words of Gamaliel, to be fighters against God. The popularity of the preacher roused in them a jealousy as great as the compunction which his words excited in the hearts of others. It belonged to their office to sanction, or at least to supervise, anything like religious teaching, or the formation of a new school, and in virtue of their authority they sent some Pharisees to interrogate him. They first asked who he was, and when he disclaimed the character of the Christ, or of Elias, or of the prophet whom Moses had promised, and declared that he was but 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness,' to prepare the way of the Lord, they asked him in the next place why he baptized? His answer dwelt less on himself than on the immediate coming, or rather the Presence, of One among them of Whom he had often spoken in the course of his preaching, Whose shoe's latchet he was not worthy to unloose, and of Whom he said that He was to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Immediately after this testimony of St. John, which his namesake specially mentions as having had an official and formal character, both in the manner in which it

<sup>8</sup> § 19. St. John i. 19—28.

was made and in the persons to whom it was addressed, the return of our Lord from His Temptation gave the Baptist the opportunity to point Him out privately to some of His own disciples as the 'Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sin of the world,' adding a further and much fuller testimony than that which he had given to the Pharisees, and declaring in particular that he had seen in Him the promised sign of the descent and abiding of the Holy Ghost on Him.<sup>9</sup> He sums up his testimony by pointing our Lord out as the Son of God. His witness as to the title of the Lamb was repeated on the following day. Two of St. John's disciples who heard it went at once to our Lord. They seem to have been St. Andrew and St. John Evangelist. The latter has at all events related to us the whole scene with great minuteness, including the first interview of St. Peter with our Lord, when He gave him the promise of the name of Cephas, as also the call of St. Philip and St. Nathanael, whom it is natural to identify with St. Bartholomew.<sup>10</sup> St. Peter was brought to our Lord by his own brother; St. Philip, alone of the five, was called by our Lord Himself. In his turn he brought to our Lord his friend Nathanael of Cana, the one who at first hesitated on account of some neighbourly prejudice against Nazareth and its people, and who was overcome by the words which showed that our Lord could read his heart.

Our Lord was on His way to Galilee when these five disciples first joined Him, and we find Him proceeding at once to Cana, where our Blessed Lady was awaiting Him.<sup>11</sup> The marriage to which He and His disciples were invited as guests, and where she appears to have filled some position which gave her authority, was probably

<sup>9</sup> § 20. St. John i. 29—34.

<sup>10</sup> § 21. St. John i. 35—51.

<sup>11</sup> § 22. St. John ii. 1—12.

that of some relative of the Holy Family. Here it was that, at the prayer of our Blessed Lady, on an occasion which in itself might seem hardly to call for any Divine interposition, our Lord manifested His glory by what St. John calls the beginning of miraculous signs, changing the water into wine, in order to supply the guests with abundance. A few days after this, He left Cana with His Mother and the cousins who are called in Scripture His brethren, as well as His disciples, and spent a short time at Capharnaum before going up to Jerusalem for the first Pasch after His Baptism.

His presence at the feast gave Him an occasion for another of these great manifestations of power and authority which now become frequent in the Gospel history.<sup>12</sup> He said little about Himself, but He taught and acted with the highest authority. His disciples had already heard Him call them to Himself as a Master, and display a knowledge of the secrets of hearts in the case of Nathanael, and these manifestations had been followed by the first miracle at Cana. At Jerusalem He again wrought many miracles, so many as to attract public attention in the most marked degree, and to furnish, in the opinion of the learned among the Jews themselves, an argument for His Divine mission. But the most wonderful act of this time was the cleansing of the Temple from the profanation of the money-changers and the traffickers in victims for the various sacrifices, an act of extreme and even severe authority which no one had ventured to resist. It gave occasion to the question put to Him by the Jews, as to the sign by which He proved His authority, a question which our Lord answered by a mysterious and parabolical allusion to His own future Passion at their hands, and to His Resurrection, which was to be the

<sup>12</sup> § 23. St. John ii. 13—25.

great sign which would establish the authority on which He acted. His words fell unintelligibly upon their carnal ears, and were treasured up against Him, to be produced in a garbled form three years later, as the ground of the accusation which led to the fulfilment of the prophecy which they contained.

For the moment our Lord was sought by many—more than He thought it well to trust, knowing, as St. John tells us, what was in man, the weakness of many good intentions, the fickleness and instability, the self-seeking and malice which many a fair exterior covered. Nicodemus came to Him by night,<sup>13</sup> and the report of the conversation which passed on one of his visits sums up for us the points on which our Lord now insisted; the new birth, the necessity of faith, the efficacy of the future Passion, to which He now again referred, and the influence of a good or a bad conscience on the reception of truth. After the feast, our Lord remained a short time in the country parts of Judæa near Jerusalem, receiving disciples who were baptized by those of His future Apostles who were already His companions.<sup>14</sup> His attractiveness grew, and seemed likely to surpass that of His Forerunner. The Jews endeavoured to sow dissensions between the followers, if they could not raise rivalry between the teachers. The occasion of the dispute seems to have been the power of purifying from sin possessed respectively by the two baptisms. The half complaint made to St. John by his disciples, who felt only too naturally for the waning influence of their master, gave him an occasion for his last recorded testimony to our Lord, in which the doctrine of His Eternal Sonship is put forward in the clearest and fullest light, and in which he speaks of himself with the utmost humility, claiming no higher office or joy than that of the Friend of the

<sup>13</sup> § 24. St. John iii. 1—21.

<sup>14</sup> § 25. St. John iii. 22—36.



Bridegroom. We have here another beautiful title of our Lord, which we owe to St. John.

No rivalry was to be feared between our Lord and St. John. The doctrine which they proclaimed was identical, and no one could mistake the perfect abnegation and humility with which St. John on every occasion made way for our Lord, and took for himself the secondary part which he describes by the title just now mentioned. But the success which could not move St. John to jealousy might very naturally attract the active opposition of those who had already shown themselves so jealous of St. John himself. The fourth Evangelist tells us that when our Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard of the increasingly large numbers of His disciples, He withdrew from Judæa and betook Himself once more to Galilee. We shall find Him all through, till the last period of His Ministry, avoiding direct collision with the ecclesiastical authorities as such, and a formal demand from them for the same kind of explanation which they had asked of St. John seems to have been always evaded by our Lord. Their hearts were already hardening or hardened towards Him, and He would give them time for reflection and for the pleadings of grace to work upon them, in that spirit of not breaking the bruised reed or quenching the smoking flax, of which the Prophet speaks in the passage applied to our Lord's conduct on a similar occasion by St. Matthew. So after a few weeks our Lord left Judæa, and chose the remote Galilee as the scene of His preaching. He took also at this time the direct road northwards through Samaria, His company being but small, and the journey not being made at one of the times of the year when the great pilgrimages to Jerusalem were usual, and being thus less likely to attract hostile attention from the people. Thus it was



that He came in the first day's journey to Jacob's well at Sichem, where He met the poor sinful woman whose history is related in the fourth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and whose conversion led to the very remarkable reception of Him by the townspeople of Sichem. To her, again, as in the case of Nicodemus, He spoke with a simplicity, directness, and openness which He was able to use on comparatively few occasions, but which we may well suppose that He would have delighted to use always if He had to deal with hearts as docile as hers.<sup>15</sup> He addressed Himself to her without waiting for an invitation, and disarmed her suspicions by making Himself a suppliant of her hospitality. He touched the needs of her soul by His promise of living water, brought her to compunction by showing that He knew the irregularities of her past life, and then assumed authority and claimed her faith in Himself. In the few words between our Lord and His Apostles which followed on this interview with the woman, we can discern the yearnings of His Sacred Heart after the future conversion of the Samaritans, as well as for that Passion of His own which was the necessary condition of that conversion and of all the fruitfulness of the labours of His disciples.

On their arrival in Galilee, the news of the imprisonment of St. John on account of his opposition to the adulterous and incestuous marriage between Herod Antipas and Herodias may have greeted the little band of travellers. This event would naturally turn many eyes upon our Lord. Would He be intimidated by the violence which had so rudely closed the career of His Forerunner? Would He, Who had shown so much miraculous power in various ways, exert it now in favour of the imprisoned prophet? Would He even rouse the

<sup>15</sup> § 26. St. John iv. 1—42.

popular feeling against Herod, and put Himself at the head of a revolt? Our Lord's conduct gave an immediate answer to such questionings. Instead of showing any fear of Herod, He was now to begin a course of preaching on a scale quite unprecedented, and in a manner which would bring the truths which He preached home to every town and village in the country, without drawing their inhabitants together to any one point. But He would devote Himself to this mission entirely, and leave the Providence of God to work out the perfection of St. John in the prison, as well as the chastisement of Herod, in the time and manner most pleasing to Himself. He had nothing to fear from Herod, but His mission was one of mercy, and not of vengeance.

Thus the point of time at which St. John was cast into prison became to the Apostles and the Evangelists the date of the beginning of our Lord's public Ministry, properly so called. Before its actual commencement some very notable events occurred, which served to usher it in, as it were, in the manner which so often characterizes the great acts of Divine mercy or Power. The Galilæans received our Lord with gladness, we are told, having themselves seen the miracles which He had lately wrought at Jerusalem at the feast which was just passed. Our Lord went at once to Cana, perhaps because our Blessed Lady was again there.<sup>16</sup> Here He received an urgent appeal from a person of high position, as it seems, in the Court of Herod himself. His son lay ill at Capharnaum, in danger of death. He had heard of the wonders wrought in Jerusalem by the new Prophet, and that He had now arrived at Cana. Cana was at a considerable distance from Capharnaum, but the father set off at once to our Lord, and begged Him to come down and heal his son. Our Lord tested his

<sup>16</sup> § 27. · St. John iv. 43—54.

faith, and at the same time made a larger demand upon it. He could heal at a distance as well as present. 'Except you see signs and wonders you will not believe.' The father repeated his prayer, but when our Lord told him to go, that his son lived, his faith had become so strong that he believed, and returned at once. On his way he was met by his servants, who had come to meet him with the news of his son's recovery, which had happened at the very time when our Lord had spoken to him. The miracle converted the father and all his household to belief in our Lord.

Our Lord seems to have been on His way to Nazareth when this miracle took place. The next Sabbath found Him in the Synagogue in which He had so often worshipped, and perhaps ministered, before, with the whole crowd of His townsfolk assembled to hear Him speak, and full of eager pride in expectation of some miracle.<sup>17</sup> But it was the will of His Father that He should not work miracles there at that time, and although all hung upon His lips, while He spoke of the fulfilment in His own Person of the words of Isaias about the mission of the Messias, yet, when He went on to say that a prophet was not accepted in his own country, and quoted the instances of Elias and Eliseus, they turned upon Him in sudden anger, and attempted to put Him to death by hurling Him from the precipitous summit of the hill on which Nazareth was built. Thus He began His Galilæan ministry with a great humiliation; His own people rejected Him, and even sought His life. Nothing of the kind had as yet taken place elsewhere. Before the jealous suspicions of the priests at Jerusalem ripened into devices to be rid of Him at any cost, the men among whom He had lived for thirty years sought to put Him to death. This incident, humanly speaking,

<sup>17</sup> § 28. St. Luke iv. 14—31.

brought about our Lord's final separation from Nazareth as His home. He was to visit it again, but henceforth His own city was to be another place, far better suited, on account of its situation, to be the centre of the great activity to which He was now to give Himself, though the majority of its inhabitants were to treat Him with an ingratitude like that of the Nazarenes, which was to be the cause of the ruin of their city.

Our Lord passed tranquilly to Capharnaum, on the shore of the Lake of Galilee, and there began at once His active course of preaching. He seems to have left His newly-formed band of disciples before going to Nazareth, and now He finds Peter and Andrew, James and John, on the shore of the inland sea, the first pair fishing, the second repairing their nets in the boat with their father and his servants. Our Lord called them to follow Him, and they at once left their nets to join Him.<sup>18</sup> Then followed the scenes on the Sabbath in Capharnaum, so marvellously contrasting with what had taken place, perhaps only a week before, at Nazareth—our Lord's authoritative teaching, the cure of the demoniac in the synagogue, the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, and, when the sun had set and so ended the Sabbath, the crowding to the door of the house in which our Lord was of sick and afflicted persons of all kinds, including demoniacs, in order to be healed. He laid His hands on the sick, and cured them, casting out the devils with a word, and forbidding them to speak and make Him known.<sup>19</sup>

Early the next morning our Lord stole out into a desert place to avoid the crowd, and when He was pursued and found by His disciples and others, He bade

<sup>18</sup> § 29. St. Matt. iv. 12—22; St. Mark i. 14—20.

<sup>19</sup> § 30. St. Mark i. 21—39; St. Luke iv. 31—44; comp. St. Matt. viii. 14—17; iv. 23—25.



them follow Him to other towns and villages, such being His mission. Thus began that great course of missionary preaching which occupied our Lord for many months from this time—perhaps, with intervals, for almost the whole of the year up to the time of the next Pasch. It is described in very few words by the Evangelists, but their expressions are of the strongest kind. His course lay from town to town and village to village throughout the whole of Galilee, and He always preached in the synagogues. His preaching was accompanied and authenticated by numberless miracles on sick persons of every kind, lunatics, and demoniacs. His fame spread far and wide, as was natural—far beyond the limits of the scene of His actual preaching—and, although it was the characteristic of His method to bring the Gospel home to one place after another, His reputation as a teacher and as a worker of miracles gathered a multitude around Him from places too widely apart for Him to visit, from all Syria, and Judæa, and Jerusalem, and Peræa, as well from Galilee itself. We are thus able to see another element in the picture as it is drawn for us by the Evangelists, that, namely, of multitudes following our Lord from place to place, and gradually forming themselves, under His guidance, into an almost organized body of disciples, who were becoming accustomed to His teaching, and so capable, as time went on, of higher and higher instruction. At the head of this multitude were some at least of the future Apostles.

The Evangelists tell us that the burthen of our Lord's preaching was the necessity of penance, the approach of the kingdom of God, and the call to faith. 'The kingdom of God is at hand, do penance, and believe the Gospel.'<sup>20</sup> These are the same topics which were urged by St. John in his preaching, as indeed they must always

<sup>20</sup> St. Mark i. 15.



be the subjects with which all evangelical preaching must begin. But we find that St. John had carried on his instructions so far at least as to give special rules of life to different classes of persons who came to him, while in our Lord's case the great monument which remains to us of His teaching at this time shows that He led those who listened to Him to the very height of Christian perfection. This great monument is the Sermon on the Mount, which is preserved to us by St. Matthew.<sup>21</sup> At this time of His Ministry, wonderful as were His miracles and the many revelations of Himself which were contained in His example, as it must have been watched and studied by the loving eyes of Peter and his companions, perhaps the most wonderful part of what they witnessed was the doctrine which they heard Him deliver. We may well consider the Sermon on the Mount as the formal promulgation of the new Evangelical Law on one particularly solemn occasion, when what our Lord may have already, either wholly or in part, taught in the course of His preaching from town to town, especially to those who had the nearest claim to be considered as His disciples, was summed and gathered up in the form in which we now possess it. This is not the place for an analysis of the Sermon on the Mount, the importance of which in the minds of the Apostles is evidenced by the care which St. Matthew has taken to record it. Thus, first of all and most of all did our Lord manifest Himself to them in His character of the Giver of the New Law.

It has already been said that the course of preaching throughout the whole of Galilee on which our Lord was now occupied is quite enough to account for a period of many months in this part of His Life. Such a course is of necessity very laborious, and, to a certain

<sup>21</sup> §§ 31—36. St. Matt. v. vi. vii.

degree, also monotonous. It is probable that every great centre of population has its peculiarity in the predominance of some kind of evil or temptation, according to the character of the inhabitants of the place, the trade or occupation which may be chiefly followed there. It is a part of the duty of the missionary to study these peculiarities, but, although he will find one kind of difficulty more developed in one place and another in another, he will in the main find a sameness in the conditions and troubles of souls which is greater than the variety of which we speak. Our Lord's teaching would therefore be in one place mainly what it had been in another, and everywhere He would have found Himself in the midst of a multitude of claimants on His attention for the relief of their evils, whether of body or of soul. The miracles which He wrought would extend to the cure of every kind of malady, but even here, the tale of wonders wrought in one place would not differ very greatly from that of those wrought elsewhere. When we consider the very high perfection which the Sermon on the Mount not only insists upon but, to a certain extent, implies in the audience to whom it was addressed, we are astonished at the thought of the laboriousness of the work to which these blessed months were devoted. They were blessed months in many ways, and mainly, perhaps, in the fresh simplicity with which our Lord's teaching was received, and in the absence of any well-defined or persistent opposition to His teaching on the part of the authorities. These very circumstances would only tend to increase the labour, because they would multiply the number of souls who would have come to our Lord for personal help and guidance, while at this time He had not as yet so far formed His Apostles as to be able to intrust to them any large share of the more important work of instruction.

It is not, therefore, surprising, if for these and other reasons which might be suggested, we find but few particular incidents which can be fixed as belonging to this period. Those, however, which are preserved to us are all such as indicate the great amount of eagerness and interest with which our Lord's footsteps were now haunted, His actions watched, and His words taken up. Thus we are told of the occasion on which, when pressed upon by the crowds which came to hear Him teach on the shores of the lake, He entered St. Peter's boat and taught the people from thence. After the instruction was over, He bade the future Apostles put out from the land and let down their nets, and then, although they had toiled all night and caught nothing, the nets were filled with an immense multitude of fishes, and were broken, while the boat, as well as that of James and John, who had come to the assistance of their partners, was almost sinking. This was the time when St. Peter fell on his knees before our Lord, and implored Him to depart from him, for he was a sinner, and when our Lord gave him in return the promise that he should 'henceforth catch men.'<sup>22</sup> The whole incident evidently belongs to a time when our Lord's missionary career was at its height; and when He was about to make a fresh departure from Capharnaum. The next miracle also, that of the healing of the leper, must also have been wrought when our Lord was already well known, and is probably mentioned by all the three first Evangelists, as having been the first occasion on which that peculiarly terrible infliction, the sacred disease, for which so many provisions had been made in the Law, was healed by our Lord.<sup>23</sup> The power thus shown was new, even in Him, and marked another

<sup>22</sup> § 37. St. Luke v. 1—11.

<sup>23</sup> § 38. St. Matt. viii. 2—4; St. Mark i. 40—45; St. Luke v. 12—16.

stage in the gradual manifestation of His dignity. This miracle had such an effect on the public mind, that our Lord was forced for a time to remain in the open country without entering the cities. It forms a sort of natural introduction to the still more wonderful display of power in the healing of the paralytic.<sup>24</sup> This cure, we are told, was wrought in the presence of a number of Pharisees and doctors of the Law, who had been collected from various parts of Galilee, Judæa, and even Jerusalem. It was wrought at Capharnaum, which had now become known as the place where our Lord was to be found, as far as He had any settled home, and it is reasonable to suppose that the assembly had been made for the express purpose of hearing His teaching and testing His doctrine. It was in the presence of these persons of authority that our Lord healed the paralytic who was let down before Him by the bearers, after mounting the roof of the house in the court of which He was teaching. The singularity of the miracle consisted, not in the cure itself, for many such had been already witnessed, but in the manner in which our Lord first asserted His power to forgive sins, the leprosy and the paralysis of the soul, and then made the cure of the maladies of the body of the poor sufferer the direct evidence that He possessed the power over the soul which He claimed, working this miracle, as He said Himself, that they might know that the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins. Immediately connected with this miracle, and perhaps still more, in the Evangelist's own memory, with the power of absolution which had thus been asserted by our Lord as one of His prerogatives in His Human Nature, one of the gifts, consequently, which were to remain on in the Church after Him, is the call of St. Matthew himself from the receipt of custom to the close companion-

<sup>24</sup> § 39. St. Matt. ix. 1—9; St. Mark ii. 1—14; St. Luke v. 17—28.



ship and following of our Lord. The feast in his house, which is mentioned immediately after this call by the three Evangelists, is not directly connected in point of time by any distinct statement with that call, but it seems natural to suppose that it ensued almost immediately, and that it gave occasion to the adverse criticism as to His eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, the mention of which is followed in St. Mark and St. Luke by the question concerning fasting, founded on the contrast between our Lord's rule as to His disciples and the rule insisted on by the Pharisees and by St. John.<sup>25</sup>

These miracles, and the incidents connected with them, are evidently such as would stand out, in some sort, as landmarks, so to speak, in the memory of the Apostles. Each of them has a significance and importance quite different from those of the more ordinary cures which were wrought by our Lord, which, as we gather from the language of the Evangelists, must have been almost innumerable, and such as to defy all attempts to chronicle them. The mention of these, therefore, in the history, is easily accounted for, and it by no means implies that there was not an abundance of more ordinary incidents which might have been mentioned if there had been the same reasons for mentioning them. We now come to the last phase, so to say, of the manifestations of our Lord at this time, a phase very remarkable indeed, in itself, and equally so on account of the consequences to which it led in His conduct, and in that of others. Up to this time we have seen no traces of hostility against our Lord on the part of any ecclesiastical authority in Galilee. The synagogues seem always to have been open to Him. The assemblage of scribes and doctors of the

<sup>25</sup> § 40. St. Matt. ix. 10—13; St. Mark ii. 15—22; St. Luke v. 29—39.



Law which has been mentioned in connection with the miracle on the paralytic may, as has been said, have been collected for the purpose of watching Him and no more. There may have been suspicion and dread, there may have been jealousy and envy, but there was as yet none of that persecution which was afterwards to deepen in intensity of malice until it led to His deliberate and judicial murder. A movement like that which gathered the multitudes around our Lord, and made His name familiar from one end of the land to the other, could not have attained the proportions which it had reached by the close of the first year of His active ministry, without arraying against Him, however secretly, all that was bad, selfish, ambitious, and impure, in the hearts of the rulers at Jerusalem. Men in that position are particularly liable to be blinded by jealousy, and to mask their narrowness even to themselves under the pretext of reverence for order and discipline. Our Lord seems to have purposely retired from their neighbourhood, perhaps lest He should prematurely provoke their open opposition, and drive them to interrogate Him as they had interrogated St. John, and as they were at last to interrogate Him when He stood before them in His Passion. And yet, at the close of the first year of His Preaching, it seems to have been in the order of the Providence of His Father that He should shock their prejudices openly in regard to a point which touched upon the observance of the decalogue itself in its one positive enactment, an enactment which related to the service of God, and was a republication of a law, as it seems, which had been handed down from the very beginning of human history.

Our Lord appears to have gone up to Jerusalem for the feast of the Pasch, and what has already been said may serve to explain why no mention of His presence

at that feast is made by the first three Evangelists. We have but one most important incident connected with His presence in the Holy City, preserved to us by St. John.<sup>26</sup> Our Lord went to the famous Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath Day, and there healed, unasked, as if it were chiefly His purpose to attract attention, the impotent man who had been a sufferer for eight and thirty years, bidding him, moreover, after the cure, take up his pallet and walk. This at once attracted remark, and as soon as it became known, as St. John tells us, that it was our Lord Who had wrought the cure and given the order, He became the subject of persecution. A long account of the argument which followed between Him and the Jewish authorities is given by St. John,<sup>27</sup> and must be left for exposition to the proper place in this work. The first ground of complaint was that these things were done on the Sabbath; the second, and still greater, was that our Lord explained Himself in language which implied that He was the Son of God—‘My Father worketh hitherto, and I also worketh.’ He spoke of the power given to the Son by the Father, and of the still more marvellous effects of that power which they would witness hereafter. He also appealed to the testimony which St. John had borne concerning Him, and to the still greater witness which was contained in the miracles which His Father gave ~~them~~ Him to work. He alluded also to the voice from heaven with which His Father Himself had accredited Him, as well as to the testimony borne to Him by the Scriptures and Moses himself. At the same time He put, as it were, His finger upon the interior vice which prevented the ecclesiastical rulers at Jerusalem from believing in Him—the vice of the love of human credit and glory.

We have thus in this discourse, not only a summary

<sup>26</sup> § 41. St. John v. 1—15.

<sup>27</sup> § 42. St. John v. 16—47.

of the arguments to which our Lord appealed in His pleading with the Jews at Jerusalem at this time, but also a proof that He did so appeal most urgently and cogently, though at the same time with the utmost fearlessness and in a tone of grave authority. Nor did He at all refrain from the line of conduct which He had deliberately adopted, the object of which seems to have been to manifest in the most striking manner the authority which He claimed as the Lord of the Sabbath. When we consider the sanctions on which the law of the Sabbath rested, and the solemn manner in which it had been promulgated, under the severest penalties, on Mount Sinai, it is easy to see how much was contained in this manifestation of summary authority on the part of our Lord as viewed by the thoughtful and docile minds of His disciples. This was another great prerogative of the New Kingdom, as great an instance of inherent authority as the power to forgive sins. Not for all the danger that must have been obvious of alienating the hearts of the people as well as of exciting the hostility of their rulers, would our Lord waive for a moment this exercise of authority. The impression which this made on His Apostles, and the importance which they learned to attribute to the power of the Son of Man as inherited by the Church, are obvious from the fact that all the Evangelists dwell at this time on incidents which are connected with this subject. It must have been on a Sabbath very soon after the cure of the impotent man, perhaps immediately after the return of the little company to Galilee, that our Lord was blamed for allowing His disciples to rub in their hands the ears of corn which they had plucked as they passed through the fields.<sup>28</sup> Our Lord's answer seems to have embraced two points of argument. He appealed to the example of David

<sup>28</sup> § 43. St. Matt. xii. 1-8; St. Mark ii. 23-28; St. Luke vi. 1-5.

and his companions in eating, in a case of necessity, the loaves of proposition, and to the practice in the Temple according to which the priests were in the habit of labouring on the Sabbath as far as was needed for the sacred service. So far the answer involved the argument of necessity, and it implied that His critics erred in judging too severely persons in whose excuse such an argument could be pleaded. They did not understand that God preferred mercy to sacrifice. But He also added a distinct assertion of His own authority: 'A greater than the Temple is here. The Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath.' This argument involved a claim as great as and greater than that which He had made when He cleansed His Father's house with a scourge of cords. On another Sabbath He still more pointedly contradicted the prejudices of the Pharisees, for after putting to them the question as to the lawfulness of healing on the Sabbath, and answering it by their own practice, in saving a sheep from a pit on such a day, He called on the man with the withered hand to stand forth in the midst, and healed him before them all.<sup>29</sup> This fresh argument was an appeal to the common rules of conduct which permitted works of mercy on the Sabbath.

The immediate result of the adoption of this line of conduct by our Blessed Lord was the formation of plots against His life. Two parties leagued against Him, the Pharisees, or the ecclesiastical rulers, and the men of the world and of statecraft who hung about the courts of the Herodian princes. On His own part, we shall see in the next section in how many ways His conduct was modified by His knowledge of these intrigues. The step which He immediately took was somewhat like that which He had taken in Judæa a year before this time,

<sup>29</sup> § 44. St. Matt. xii. 9—14; St. Mark iii. 1—6; St. Luke vi. 6—11.



when the number of His disciples first attracted notice and jealousy. Our Lord now again retired from before His enemies. As it appears, He drew off to the sea-coast instead of showing Himself continually in Capharnaum and the other cities where He was so well known. An immense multitude, however, followed Him from all parts, partly to listen to His teaching, partly for the sake of the miraculous cures and the deliverances from evil spirits which He continually wrought. In this withdrawal, as St. Matthew points out, our Lord was fulfilling a note which had been foretold of Him.<sup>30</sup> He was not to contend, or to cry out, He was not to bruise the broken reed, or extinguish smoking flax, until the time came to send forth judgment unto victory.<sup>31</sup>

This retirement of our Lord's brings us, as it were, to a pause in the narrative, and we may well use it for the purpose of a short retrospect. Little more than a year had now passed since the beginning of our Lord's Galilæan Ministry at Capharnaum. The history of this year cannot be better summed up than in the words of Isaias which our Lord had applied to Himself at its outset in the synagogue at Nazareth. 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, wherefore He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He hath sent Me to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty those that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward.'<sup>32</sup> Its characteristic was that it was the first year of preaching the Gospel to the poor. To this even the miracles of our Lord are subordinated in the Gospel history, as in the prophetic description of Isaias. The spiritual treasures of truth

<sup>30</sup> § 45. St. Matt. xii. 15-21; St. Mark iii. 7-12.

<sup>31</sup> Isaias xlii. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Isaias lxi. 1, seq.; St. Luke iv. 18, 19.



and grace were poured forth in profusion all over Galilee. The world never had before or since such a Teacher as the Incarnate Son of God, Who now went about from city to city and village to village, nor has there ever been a more direct and thorough unfolding of the sublimest practical truths of religion as that of which the Sermon on the Mount is the summing up. The whole science of Christian spirituality is founded upon this teaching of our Lord, and we cannot doubt that it left its traces deep on the minds of thousands besides those chosen few who were afterwards to be His Apostles. Our Lord taught during this period with an openness and fulness which He was afterwards obliged, in some degree, to limit. He spoke far more constantly and freely of the Father and of the relation of Christians to Him as His dear children, than afterwards, when the opposition against Him had assumed the terrible form of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost in some, while on others the lavish abundance of His doctrine had fallen unappreciated on account of the hardness and worldliness of their hearts.

We cannot doubt, also, that during this first period our Lord made Himself more accessible to the great multitude of the disciples than afterwards, when He had formally called the Twelve to the office of the Apostolate. But we gather from His words to the Apostles when the four were called at the beginning of the Preaching, and also to St. Peter on the occasion of the miraculous fishing, that some of them at least already occupied an intermediate position between Him and the great mass of His disciples. The two great doctrines of the Church and of the Cross were as yet held in reserve, though the disciples must have gathered very much concerning their position as a body in the world from the Sermon on the Mount; and the last of the Beatitudes, as well as other

points of our Lord's teaching, involved the Cross. The same may be said as to the Counsels of Perfection and such points as the correction of the Law of Marriage, and the elevation of marriage itself to the rank of a Christian sacrament. Our Lord had declared that He had not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it, and the future great results of His teaching may at this time have seemed likely to issue in the regeneration of the ancient system of the Synagogue from within, with an amount of glory and spiritual beauty such as had never hitherto been conceived.

To those who watched closely the action and conduct of our Blessed Lord, this time was marked by a series of manifestations concerning Him, increasing continually in sublimity. The marvellous declaration from heaven at His Baptism may have been known to few. No sooner has St. John Baptist pointed Him out to his own disciples as the Lamb of God—thus passing at once to the truth concerning Him which was not to become an historical fact till the very moment of the Passion, while its efficacy lay at the root of the whole work of St. John himself as the preacher of penance—than the inherent authority of our Lord is manifested in the way in which He receives those who come to Him, promising to one a new name of mysterious meaning, bidding another follow Him, revealing to another the secrets of his heart, and promising them all the fulfilment in Himself of the vision of the great Patriarch Jacob. Then came the power of miracles of the highest kind, and authority exercised over the Temple of God in the face of its human rulers and officers. The same strain of inherent authority and majesty marked His teaching to Nicodemus, and became the characteristic which struck upon the minds of the multitude when He began His public course of preaching. The miracle on the nobleman's

son marked a further advance in their knowledge of His power over diseases. But, as we have already said, the greatest display of all, to those whose hearts were capable of the lesson, was His teaching itself taken together with its manner, the purity and sublimity of its precepts, the manner in which they throw open the path of perfection to all classes and degrees, the philosophy of life which they implied, the near relationship to and imitation of God to which they led. And again, if the Lawgiving on the Mount was an exercise of royal authority which recalled the legislation of Sinai itself, there were points of authority calmly assumed by our Lord, or if questioned, proved by miracle, which went beyond anything that had been done even when the Law was given by Moses. That Law gave no power to man to forgive sins. And again, when our Lord vouchsafed to defend His conduct with regard to the Sabbath day, it became evident that He claimed a power by which He could set aside and change, if He so chose, the obligations of the Sabbath itself. But, as it belonged to God alone to forgive sins, so it could belong to no one but God to alter or suspend the institution which was based on the great act of Divine Omnipotence in the creation of the world.

However far in the knowledge of their Master this series of manifestations may have led the more thoughtful of the disciples, it was but natural, according to the rules on which our fallen nature acts, that the greatness of the powers thus assumed by our Lord should have been instinctively felt by those who needed only the opportunity to declare themselves His enemies, and felt as a motive, not for belief in Him and submission to Him, but for opposing Him unscrupulously. Experience has frequently shown to what lengths, in the hindrance of good and the accomplishment of evil, a selfish jealousy will lead those who are high in station in the earthly

kingdom of God. The first blow against our Lord came from the same quarter as the last which was to cause His death—not from the throne of Herod or the Imperial power of the Roman Cæsars, but from the highest ministers of the Temple and the altar. It was not statecraft, nor the policy of a tyrannical government which dealt that blow, but the jealousy of ecclesiastical dignitaries, goaded to fury by His power with the people, and making the law of God their pretext. Such blows are the masterpieces of Satan, and seldom fail to have a terrible effect. They may be said to oppose God with His own instruments. Humanly speaking, the opposition of the prelates at Jerusalem was of incalculable moment, for, from the time when it became pronounced, it could always be said, in the words which St. John has reported, “Hath any one of the rulers believed in Him, or of the Pharisees?’ and it would be the case that ‘no man spoke openly concerning Him, for fear of the Jews.’<sup>33</sup> It is no wonder, therefore, that the point of time at which the history has now arrived should be marked as so important in the memory of the Apostles and Evangelists, and should have been, in truth, the point at which our Lord Himself adopted in so many respects a new line of conduct and policy.

<sup>33</sup> St. John vii. 48, 13.



## CHAPTER VII.

### *The first stage of our Lord's Ministry in the Four Gospels.*

WHEN we turn from the narrative of the first period of our Lord's Public Life, as it has been given in the preceding chapter, to the statements relating to the same period which are to be found in the several Gospels, we may be inclined to think that the arrangement which has been here followed appears arbitrary, and even in some respects contradictory to the history as set forth by the writers on whose authority all our knowledge of the matter must depend. Such a result is inevitable from the nature of the case, when readers approach the four Gospels without previous study of the method and arrangement of each. On the other hand, it may be assumed with confidence that when such study has been fairly made, and when, in consequence, the object and plan of each Evangelist has been ascertained, as alone they can be ascertained, from internal evidence, supported by what can be ascertained from early Christian writers, such an arrangement as that which has been here given will not only seem natural, but will commend itself to the mind, at least as to its general outline, with a very considerable amount of probability or even of certainty.

We must write here under some disadvantage, as our present work leaves no room for that careful and



detailed investigation as to the plan of each Evangelist, the results of which must yet be to some extent assumed. It must content us to presuppose as little as possible. There can be no doubt as to the general agreement of the Gospels with regard to the main features of the period as they have been drawn out above. The preaching of our Lord is its main and central subject, and that preaching, in the manner and with the results which made it the foundation of the Christian society, began in Galilee after the imprisonment of St. John Baptist by Herod. It is here, therefore, that the historical Evangelists, if we may so speak of the first three in contrast to the fourth, who may be called pre-eminently the doctrinal Evangelist, begin their story. The mysteries of the Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation are prefixed in each case, inasmuch as they were the foundation and immediate inauguration of the Public Life itself, and of the Preaching of our Lord in particular. We find the subsequent history in its simplest form in the Gospel of St. Mark. It is assumed in the present part of our work, as has been said, that this Gospel is the most elementary of the four, that is, that it represents, in the simplest form, the ordinary Christian instruction, as based upon the actions of our Lord, in the form in which it would be presented to a community of disciples or believers who had but just become acquainted with the faith. It is a further question, which need not be argued here, whether in point of time St. Mark's Gospel preceded that of St. Matthew and that of St. Luke, or whether, as is also assumed in this work, it is founded on St. Matthew, and adapted to its own audience by large omissions and a few alterations as to order. We may look to St. Mark, therefore, as giving us the period with which we are now concerned in its elementary and primary outlines. His order will be found to correspond

exactly with that which has been followed above. He begins with a short summary, from the Preaching of St. John Baptist and the Baptism and Temptation of our Lord to His return into Galilee when St. John was cast into prison. Then he mentions the call of the four disciples on the sea-shore. He then gives, in considerable detail, the story of the Sabbath at Capharnaum, which seems to have been the first of our Lord's Preaching, the demoniac in the synagogue, the cure of St. Peter's mother-in-law, and then of multitudes of sick persons and demoniacs after the sun had set. He next mentions our Lord's retirement on the following morning, and, in the fewest possible words, the preaching through Galilee which occupied so large a portion of the first year of His Ministry. Then he relates the cure of the leper, and our Lord's subsequent retirement into 'desert places,' then the return to Capharnaum and the healing of the paralytic, to which he subjoins the call of Levi or Matthew, the feast in his house, the objection as to eating with publicans and sinners, and the question about fasting. Then he passes to the incident of the grains of corn which raised the question of the Sabbath, our Lord's answer, and His assertion that He was Lord of the Sabbath. Then we find the miracle wrought on the Sabbath day on the man with a withered hand, the consequent conspiracy against our Lord, and His retirement from before His enemies.<sup>1</sup>

With one exception, which will presently be noted, all these details might have been taken by St. Mark from St. Matthew's Gospel, in which, however, the order is not the same, and which contains also the long Sermon on the Mount, which St. Mark has omitted. Before speaking of St. Matthew, however, let us turn to St. Luke, who is

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark i. ii. iii. 1-8.

of the three the most like an historian in arrangement and style. The events related above are exactly in the same order in St. Luke as in St. Mark, though there are two additions made by St. Luke to the history. In each case the addition is like something which is inserted by St. Matthew and St. Mark, though sufficiently distinct to be recognized as a different incident. St. Luke, like the others, after describing the mission and preaching of St. John, and our Lord's Baptism and Temptation, begins his story with our Lord's return into Galilee after the first Pasch, and, like St. Mark, relates in full the incidents of the first Sabbath of Capharnaum. But he prefixes to the history of that Sabbath the incidents of the previous Sabbath at Nazareth, where our Lord had been rejected by His townsfolk, and His life attempted by them. Here again we have a short portion of the history as to which our Blessed Lady would have been the best authority, and which was probably not witnessed by any of the future Apostles. This is a great addition to our knowledge as to the beginning of our Lord's preaching. It resembles, as we have said, what is mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark at a subsequent time as to our Lord's visit to Nazareth in the course of His preaching, and His comparative inability to work miracles there on account of the unbelief of the inhabitants. The other addition made by St. Luke to the history consists in the narrative of the miraculous draught of fishes, which he places after our Lord's preaching has been for some time going on, and when crowds already gathered round Him and pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God. This addition by St. Luke resembles in the manner just now explained the first call of the four disciples as mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark, but the differences are far too plain to need pointing out. But, having this addition to make, St. Luke

has omitted the call of the four disciples before the beginning of the preaching, and he also follows St. Mark in omitting the Sermon on the Mount, intending later on to supply the omission by the insertion of the Sermon on the Plain, in which so many of the same topics are handled in a somewhat different manner. In other respects St. Luke gives the same general outline of the period of which we are speaking as St. Mark. After the account of the Sabbath at Nazareth, he passes to that at Capharnaum, with the cure of the demoniac, St. Peter's mother-in-law, and the many 'sick of divers diseases' after sundown. Then he mentions the flight of our Lord, the preaching throughout Galilee, and (after the miracle of the fishes, which is new), the healing of the leper, that of the paralytic, the claim to forgive sins, the call of St. Matthew, the feast in his house, and the rest. Then we have at once the bruising of the grains of corn, the complaint against our Lord, the miracle on the Sabbath day on the man with the withered hand, and the conspiracy against our Lord in consequence.<sup>2</sup>

Something has already been said as to the supplementary character of the Gospel of St. John, and the subject can hardly have a much better illustration than that which is to be found in his statements in relation to the period now before us. There are many incidents in the fourth Gospel which seem to have been inserted simply for historical purposes, though St. John usually introduces what he does introduce in this way for the purpose of relating some discourse or disputation of our Lord. Looking at his Gospel, for the moment, simply as a history, we are struck by the very rich additions which he has made to the narrative as it has been left by the three other Evangelists. They, as has been said, avoid all mention of what passed elsewhere than in

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke iii. iv. vi. I—II.



Galilee in this and other stages of our Lord's life. St. John's first five chapters are entirely supplementary, and they are chiefly occupied with what passed in Judæa or Samaria. After the great præmium on the Divinity of our Lord, St. John gives us the witness of St. John Baptist, then the answer which he gave to the messengers of the Sanhedrin, involving another testimony to our Lord, his declaration as to the Lamb of God, and the consequent introduction of five future Apostles to their Master. He adds to this the account of the miracle at Cana, followed by the short residence of our Lord at Capharnaum, and all that took place at the first Pasch at Jerusalem, including the conversation with Nicodemus. Then he gives us St. John's last and most explicit declaration that our Lord was the Son of God, the journey through Samaria, the sojourn at Sichem, and the healing of the nobleman's son at Capharnaum by our Lord when at Cana. All this matter is in addition to our former knowledge, and it fills up the gap left by the other Evangelists, except as to the Fasting and Temptation, as to the whole interval between our Lord's Baptism and the beginning of His Preaching. The addition of the incident as to the cure of the nobleman's son is very valuable to us, not only on its own account, and as showing the gradual advance in our Lord's demands upon the faith of those who came to Him, but also because it throws so much light on the relation of St. John's Gospel to those which had preceded it. He seems here not only distinctly to refer to them, but to supply deliberately an incident which was required to explain what St. Luke had narrated. He refers to his predecessor when he says that our Lord Himself 'gave testimony that a prophet hath no honour in his own country,' words which St. Mark and St. Luke mention as having been spoken by our Lord on the two different



occasions when He visited Nazareth. And he adds a necessary incident by the relation of this miracle, because it explains the words of our Lord in the synagogue of Nazareth, as quoted by St. Luke, as to the wonderful works which the Nazarenes had heard of in Capharnaum—the place which was just then ringing with the wonderful cure of the child whom our Lord had healed at a distance. Here the fourth Gospel leaves the ordinary narrative, and is absolutely silent as to the whole of the Galilæan preaching of the first year, the Sermon on the Mount, the miracles of the fishes, the leper, the paralytic, and the rest. In the fifth chapter we find ourselves once more in Jerusalem, at a feast which we assume to be the Pasch, when, as has been said above, our Lord openly and, as it seems, deliberately braved the prejudices of the highest ecclesiastical authorities on the question of the Sabbath.<sup>3</sup>

The importance of the addition made by St. John in this fifth chapter may be gathered from what has already been said concerning it. Here again we find ourselves in Judæa and in Jerusalem, and we are enabled to see how the persecution of our Lord on account of His teaching and practice concerning the Sabbath day took its rise in the capital itself, and was first evoked by the miracle at the Probatic Pool, as well as by the arguments which our Lord used at that time in answer to the priests at Jerusalem. The incidents with reference to this question which the other Evangelists have related seem to have occurred in Galilee. It is clear that the miracle at the Pool had made a great impression, and that our Lord's alleged disrespect to the Sabbath had drawn on Him the determined enmity of the authorities. The importance to the onward course of His Ministry of the check, so to speak, which it received at this time

<sup>3</sup> St. John i. ii. iii. iv. v.

is made more evident than ever to us by the care which St. John has here taken to mention it and illustrate it, by enabling us to trace the opposition which henceforth followed Him everywhere to the source from which it originally sprang.

For the same reason which makes it so comparatively easy to trace the chief features of this part of our Lord's life in these last Gospels, it is at first sight equally difficult to detect them in the narrative of the first Evangelist. For the three last Evangelists follow no other order than that of time, and therefore, although they may omit or insert this or that incident, the general onward flow of events is not disturbed. But in St. Matthew we have an Evangelist who neither follows nor professes to follow the order of time, while he has an order of his own which often leads him to desert chronological sequence. More than half the apparent difficulties in the Harmony of the Gospels come from the neglect on the part of commentators to observe this simple fact. It is as if we had three or four catalogues of the works of a great writer, or the pictures of a great painter, or the military exploits of a great general, and as if all but one of these catalogues were drawn up in the order of time, while that other was drawn up on some different principle, as that of putting together first the tragedies and then the comedies and then the histories of Shakspeare, or of collecting the landscapes of the painter or the battles of the general under one head, and then making another list of the portraits of the one and the sieges and defences of the other. In such a case, if these last catalogues were compared with those drawn up on the principle of time, there would certainly be an apparent, but not a real, contradiction between them. So it is with the order of St. Matthew as compared with that of the other

three Evangelists. It has been shown elsewhere that although he follows the historical order in the main divisions of his Gospel, he has yet drawn up large portions of it, almost the whole, indeed, that precedes the last account of our Lord in Jerusalem before His Passion, according to another order, which has led him to arrange facts in a different manner from the other Evangelists. The sequence of ideas in such cases may often be difficult to settle beyond question, and yet it may be indubitable that there is such a sequence. In the case before us, it may be considered as certain, for instance, that St. Matthew does not intend his readers to think that the chain of miracles which occupy the greater part of the two chapters which follow the Sermon on the Mount in his Gospel succeeded one the other chronologically as he has put them.<sup>4</sup> They are a chain of miracles collected from various epochs of our Lord's Public Life, and they are collected where they are in order, as it seems, that the proof from miracles of every kind may succeed the great promulgation of doctrine which is contained in the Sermon on the Mount. He puts the miracle of the leper in the first place, thus testifying to the great importance which was attached to that miracle. In the second place he puts the healing of the centurion's servant, which, from St. Luke's account, belongs to a later date than that at which we have arrived. In the third place he puts the cure of Peter's mother-in-law, and the other cures which took place on that Sabbath day in Capharnaum, but he leaves out the cure of the demoniac in the synagogue, and goes on almost immediately to the most remarkable instance of our Lord's power over demoniacs which is recorded in the Gospels, that of the deliverance of the man who had a legion of devils in the land of the Gerasenes, which

<sup>4</sup> St. Matt. viii. 2 ; ix. 34.

was preceded by the stilling of the tempest at a word. This belongs to a later date. He mentions the cure of the paralytic and the claim to forgive sins in immediate connection with his own call, as do the other two historical Evangelists, and he subjoins to this another cluster of miracles from a later period, the healing of the woman with an issue of blood who touched the hem of our Lord's garment, the raising from the dead of the daughter of Jairus—the only miracle of that kind which occurs in his Gospel—and the cure of two blind men, as it seems, just after. Then, after a considerable interval in his Gospel, in which he is occupied with other topics, according to the order of which we have spoken, he mentions the incident of the disciples rubbing the grains of corn in their hands, the charge which was immediately made, our Lord's miracle in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and the conspiracy against Him to which it led. Thus it is fair to say that St. Matthew recognizes the importance of the point in our Lord's Public Life which is marked by His claim to be the Lord of the Sabbath, and that he points out, as is his wont, in connection with prophecy, the change in our Lord's conduct which was connected with the rise of persecution against Him. Thus the important features of the time on which we have been dwelling are all to be found in the Gospel of St. Matthew, though the arrangement of that Gospel prevents us from saying that he has pointed out their sequence.

On the other hand, we owe to him what no one of the other Evangelists has given us, the record of our Lord's teaching at this time which is contained in the Sermon on the Mount. His Gospel is that in which the practical teaching of our Lord, as distinguished on the one hand from dogma and disputation, and on the other from simple history, occupies the chief place. It



is the Gospel of the Christian teacher. St. Matthew shows us how much his mind was occupied by this subject, both by what he inserts and what he omits, for, after speaking of the preaching of St. John, the Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation of our Lord, and His return to Galilee, he hurries on at once to the Sermon on the Mount, in his account of our Lord's Ministry, without any further preface than a reference to the prophecy of Isaias—the fulfilment of which he sees in the selection of the Galilee of the Gentiles as the scene of our Lord's preaching—and the simple mention of the vocation of the four Apostles which took place just before the commencement of the preaching. Then he gives us the Sermon on the Mount in full, although that Sermon, as is clear from the character of its contents, could not have been delivered to an assembly which was not made up of persons who had already become believers in and disciples of our Lord. The Sermon on the Mount is followed by the chain of various miracles of which mention has been made, which includes the raising of the daughter of Jairus and the cure of the woman with an issue of blood as well as that of the demoniacs in the land of the Gerasenes. All these last named miracles belong to a later time than the first year of our Lord's preaching, but they are beautifully in their place in this part of the Gospel of St. Matthew, in which he shows our Lord's power in so many varied aspects, over leprosy, over disease at a distance, over fever, over various diseases and cases of possession, over the winds and waves, over the legion of the devils, over sin itself as proved in the case of the paralytic, as well as the efficacy of the mere touch of the hem of His garment in the case of the woman with an issue of blood, and lastly, over death itself, in the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and over blindness, and dumbness when



joined to possession, in the case of the miracles which close the series, the last of which may have been added as an instance of the calumny about His alleged league with Beelzebub, which, however, did not find utterance until the second stage of His preaching. It is for the purpose of gathering together in one place so grand a constellation of wonders that St. Matthew has here set aside the historical order.<sup>5</sup>

Another great section of His Gospel succeeds, in which St. Matthew seems to intend to arm the Evangelical teacher with our Lord's instruction as to his own conduct, and what he is to expect from men, after having given him so large a treasure as to the subject matter of his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. For immediately after the chain of miracles, he gives us the account of the appointment and mission of the Twelve Apostles, with our Lord's long discourse to them on the occasion of their being sent to preach. This did not take place until the second year of His Ministry. After this he tells us of the coming of the two disciples of St. John Baptist, and of our Lord's testimony to His Forerunner, which is followed by His complaint of the wayward obstinacy of the men of the generation to which He and St. John were sent, whom He compares to the children in the market-place. He adds the upbraiding of Corozain, Bethsaida, and Capharnaum, and the thanksgiving of our Lord to His Father because He had hid the Gospel from the wise and prudent, and had revealed it unto little ones. It is only after all this, so evidently bearing on the reception of the Gospel teaching by men of various kinds, that St. Matthew comes to the anecdote of the grains of the corn, and the persecution on account of the Sabbath, and to this he subjoins, after illustrating our Lord's retirement before His enemies

<sup>5</sup> St. Matt. iii. iv. v. vi. vii. viii. ix. 1—34.

from prophecy, the other shape which the opposition to Him took soon after this, in the charge about Beelzebub, and the demand for a sign. The object of the whole section seems to be to prepare the Gospel teacher for his work by the personal instruction given by our Lord to the Apostles, as also to strengthen him against opposition and persecution of every kind, by the example of the treatment which our Lord Himself and the Baptist had met with from the Jews.<sup>6</sup>

Of all that has been supplied by the other Evangelists as to this period, St. Matthew actually omits nothing the omission of which cannot be very easily accounted for. It would have been against the common rule of his Gospel to mention anything that happened out of Galilee as to this time, and we have therefore a sufficient reason why he has left out so much that St. John afterwards inserted. The miracle on the nobleman's son and the rejection at Nazareth took place before the beginning of the Public Preaching. The miraculous draught of fishes is a scene which he might have introduced, but he had already mentioned the first call of the four disciples, at which there was no miracle and no preaching to the multitude. We have already seen a reason why he omitted the cure of the demoniac in the synagogue at Capharnaum. He passes over the whole account of that Sabbath, except where he uses the healing of St. Peter's mother-in-law and of the multitudes of sick in the evening in his chain of miracles.

The omissions in St. Mark are easily accounted for, as it would have been quite against the whole character of his Gospel, which deals with actions rather than with works, to insert the account of the Sermon on the Mount, and he would leave out the miraculous draught of fishes

<sup>6</sup> St. Matt. ix. 35—38; x. xi. xii. 1—20.

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for the same reason as St. Matthew. The omissions in St. Luke and St. John need no explanation when the general rules which they follow are duly considered. St. Luke, like the two first Evangelists, begins our Lord's 'Public Life' in Galilee. Thus he omits all that took place before our Lord's return from the first Pasch, except His Baptism and Temptation. He adds at the beginning of this first year of preaching the wonderful scene in the synagogue at Nazareth, of which, as far as we can gather, none of the future Apostles were witnesses. In other respects, as has been said, his account of the first year is exactly the same as that of St. Mark, except that he substitutes the miraculous draught of fishes for the first vocation of the Apostles, and omits the Sermon on the Mount, for which he afterwards substitutes the Sermon on the Plain. We need hardly point out how entirely unreasonable it would be to expect that St. John would have inserted the record of the Galilæan preaching which his predecessors had already given so fully.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Harmony of the Gospels as to the First Period of the Public Life.*

FROM THE BAPTISM OF ST. JOHN TO THE FIRST CONSPIRACY AGAINST  
OUR LORD.

#### § 16.—*Preaching of St. John Baptist.*

St. Matt. iii. 1—12.

St. Mark i. 1—8.

St. Luke iii. 1—18.

The beginning  
of the Gospel of  
Jesus Christ the  
Son of God.

Now in those days came John the Baptist preaching in the desert of Judæa, and saying, Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Ituræa, and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, under the high priests Annas and Caiaphas, the word of the Lord

St. Matt. iii. 3, 4.

St. Mark i. 2—4.

St. Luke iii. 3—6.

For this is he, who was spoken of by Isaias the prophet, saying, A voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.<sup>1</sup>

As it is written in Isaias the prophet: Behold I send My angel before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee.<sup>2</sup> The voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.<sup>3</sup> John was in the desert baptizing, and preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins.

came to John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaias the prophet, A voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.<sup>4</sup>

And John himself had his garment of camel's hair, and a lea-

<sup>1</sup> Isaias xl. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Mal. iii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Isaias xl. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Isaias xl. 3—5.



St. Matt. iii. 5—9.

St. Mark i. 5, 6.

St. Luke iii. 7, 8.

thern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey.<sup>5</sup>

Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judæa, and all the country about Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

And there went out to him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem, and were baptized by him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

And seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, coming to his baptism, he said to them, Ye brood of vipers, who hath showed you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruit worthy of penance, and think not to

He said, therefore, to the multitudes that came forth to be baptized by him, Ye offspring of vipers, who hath showed you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruit worthy of penance, and do not begin to

<sup>5</sup> 4 Kings i. 8 (of Elias).

St. Matt. iii. 9, 10.

say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father, for I tell you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that yieldeth not good fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into he fire

St. Mark i.

St. Luke iii. 8—13.

say, We have Abraham for our father. For I say to you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.

And the people asked him, saying: What then shall we do? And he, answering, said to them, He that hath two coats, let him give to him that hath none, and he that hath meat, let him do in like manner. And the publicans also came to be baptized, and said to him, Master, what shall we do? But he said to

St. Matt. ii. 11, 12.

St. Mark i. 6—8.

St. Luke iii. 13—17.

I, indeed, baptize  
you with water  
unto penance, but  
He Who is to come  
after me, is stronger  
than I, Whose shoes  
I am not worthy  
to carry, He shall  
baptize you with  
the Holy Ghost  
and with fire.

And he preach-  
ed, saying, There  
cometh after me  
One mightier than  
I, the latchet of  
Whose shoes I am  
not worthy to stoop  
down and loose.  
I have baptized  
you with water,  
but He shall bap-  
tize you with the  
Holy Ghost.

them, Take nothing  
more than that  
which is appointed  
you. And the sol-  
diers asked him,  
saying: And what  
shall we do? And  
he said to them,  
Do violence to no  
man, neither ca-  
lumniate any man,  
and be content  
with your pay.

And as people  
were of opinion,  
and all were think-  
ing in their hearts  
of John, that per-  
haps he might be  
the Christ, John  
answered, saying  
to them all, I,  
indeed, baptize you  
with water, but  
there shall come  
One mightier than  
I, the latchet of  
Whose shoes I am  
not worthy to  
loose. He shall  
baptize you with  
the Holy Ghost,  
and with fire.  
Whose fan is in

Whose fan is in

St. Matt. iii. 12.

His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His floor, and gather His wheat into the barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.

St. Mark i.

St. Luke iii. 17, 18.

His hand, and He will purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire. And many other things, exhorting, did he preach to the people.

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§ 17.—*Baptism of Jesus Christ.*

St. Matt. iii. 13—17.

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan, unto John, to be baptized by him.

St. Mark i. 9—11.

And it came to pass, in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

St. Luke iii. 21—23.

But John stayed Him, saying, I ought to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus, answering, said to him, Suffer it now: for so it becometh

St. Matt. iii. 15—17.  
us to fulfil all justice. Then he suffered Him.

And Jesus, being baptized, went up presently out of the water, and, behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending, as a dove, and coming upon Him. And, behold, a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.

St. Mark i. 10, 11.  
And forthwith coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opened and the Spirit, as a dove, descending and remaining on Him. And there came a voice from heaven, Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.

St. Luke iii. 21—23.

Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape as a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased. And Jesus Himself was beginning about the age of thirty years, being (as it was supposed) the son of Joseph.



§ 18.—*Fasting and Temptation of Jesus Christ.*

St. Matt. iv. 1—11.

St. Mark i. 12, 13.

St. Luke iv. 1—13.

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterwards hungry.

And immediately the Spirit drove Him out into the desert. And He was in the desert forty days and forty nights, and was tempted by Satan, and He was with beasts.

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the desert, for the space of forty days, and was tempted by the devil. And He did eat nothing in those days, and when they were ended, He was hungry.

And the tempter, coming, said to Him, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But He answered, and said, It is written, Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.<sup>6</sup>

And the devil said to Him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him : It is written, That man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word of God.

<sup>6</sup> Deut. viii. 3.

St. Matt. iv. 8—10, 5, 6

Again the devil took Him up into a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. And he said to Him, All these will I give thee, if, falling down, thou wilt adore me. Then Jesus saith to him, Begone, Satan! for it is written, The Lord the God thou shalt adore, and Him only shalt thou serve.<sup>7</sup>

Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple. And said to Him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down,

St. Mark i.

St. Luke iv. 5—9.

And the devil led Him into a high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, And he said to Him, To thee will I give all this power, and the glory of them, for to me they are delivered; and to whom I will, I give them. If thou, therefore, wilt adore before me, all shall be thine. And Jesus, answering, said to him, It is written, Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence. For

<sup>7</sup> Deut. vi. 13.

St. Matt. iv. 6, 7.

for it is written,  
That He hath given  
His Angels charge  
of thee, and in  
their hands shall  
they bear thee up,  
lest, perhaps, thou  
hurt thy foot  
against a stone.<sup>8</sup>  
Jesus said to him,  
It is written again:  
Thou shalt not  
tempt the Lord  
thy God.<sup>9</sup>

Then the devil  
left Him, and, be-  
hold, Angels came  
and ministered to  
Him.

St. Mark i. 13.

And the Angels  
ministered to Him.

St. Luke iv. 10—13.

it is written, that  
He hath given His  
Angels charge over  
thee, that they keep  
thee, and that in  
their hands they  
shall bear thee up,  
lest thou dash thy  
foot against a stone.  
And Jesus, answer-  
ing, said to him,  
It is said, Thou  
shalt not tempt the  
Lord thy God.

And when all  
the temptation was  
ended, the devil  
departed from Him  
for a time.

<sup>8</sup> Psalm xc. 11, 12.

<sup>9</sup> Deut. vi. 16.

§ 19.—*The testimony of St.**John Baptist to the Pharisees.*

St. John i. 19—28.

And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to him, to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and did not deny, and he confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him: What then? Art thou Elias? And he said, I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No. Then they said to him, Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaias said.<sup>10</sup> And they that were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said to him, Why then dost thou baptize, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize in water, but there hath stood One in the midst of you, Whom you know not.

St. John i. 27, 28.

The same is He that shall come after me, Who is preferred before me, the latchet of Whose shoe I am not worthy to loose. These things were done in Bethania beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

§ 20.—*St. John points out the Lamb of God.*

St. John i. 29—34.

The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and he saith, Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a Man, Who is preferred before me, because He was before me. And I knew Him not, but that He may be made manifest in Israel, therefore am I come baptizing in water.

And John gave testimony, saying, I saw the Spirit coming down as a dove from heaven, and He remained upon Him. And I knew Him not, but He Who sent me to baptize in water, said to me, He upon Whom

<sup>10</sup> Isaias xl. 3.

St. John i. 33, 34.

thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, He it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and I gave testimony that this is the Son of God.

§ 21.—*Some disciples of St. John join our Lord.*

St. John i. 35—51.

Again, the following day, John stood, and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as He was walking, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. And Jesus turning, and seeing them following Him, saith to them, What seek you? They said to Him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest Thou? He saith to them, Come and see. They came, and saw where He abode, and they stayed with Him that day. Now it was about the tenth hour.

And Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who had heard of

St. John i. 41—48.

John, and followed Him. He first findeth his brother Simon, and said to him, We have found the Messias (which is, being interpreted, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. And Jesus, looking upon him, said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas (which is interpreted, Peter). On the following day He would go forth into Galilee, and He findeth Philip. And Jesus said to him, Follow Me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Philip findeth Nathanael, and said to him, We have found Him of Whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus the son of Joseph of Nazareth. And Nathanael said to him, Can anything of good come from Nazareth? Philip saith to him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and He saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile! Nathanael said to Him, Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered, and said to him, Before that



St. John i. 49—51.

Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered Him and said, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said to him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, thou believest? greater things than these shalt thou see. And He saith to him, Amen, amen I say to you, you shall see the heaven opened, 'and the Angels of God ascending and descending' upon the Son of Man.<sup>11</sup>

§ 22.—*The first Miracle of Christ at the Marriage Feast.*

St. John ii. 1—12.

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. And Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the marriage.

And the wine failing, the mother of Jesus saith to Him, They have no wine. And Jesus saith to her, Woman, what is to Me

St. John ii. 5—11.

and to thee? My hour is not yet come. His mother saith to the waiters, Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye.

Now there were set there six water-pots of stone, according to the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three measures apiece. Jesus saith to them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And Jesus saith to them, Draw out now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast. And they carried it. And when the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, and knew not whence it was, but the waiters knew who had drawn the water, the chief steward calleth the bridegroom, and saith to him, Every man at first setteth forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse, but thou hast kept the good wine until now!

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and He manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in

<sup>11</sup> Gen. xxviii. 12 (Jacob's Ladder).

St. John ii. 12.

Him. After this He went down to Capharnaum, He and His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples, and they remained there not many days.

§ 23.—*The Feast of the Pasch at Jerusalem.*

St. John ii. 13—25.

And the pasch of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

And He found in the temple them that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when He had made, as it were, a scourge of little cords, he drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen, and the money of the changers He poured out, and the tables He overthrew. And to them that sold doves He said, Take these things hence, and make not the house of My Father a house of traffic. And His disciples remembered, that it was written, 'The zeal of thy house hath eaten Me up.'<sup>12</sup>

The Jews, therefore, an-

St. John ii. 18—25.

swered, and said to Him, What sign dost Thou show unto us, seeing Thou dost these things? Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said, Six and forty years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou raise it up in three days? But He spoke of the temple of His body. When therefore He was risen again from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the scripture, and the word that Jesus had said.

Now when He was at Jerusalem, at the pasch, upon the festival day, many believed in His name, seeing His signs which He did. But Jesus did not trust Himself unto them, for that He knew all men, and because He needed not that any should give testimony of man, for He knew what was in man.

<sup>12</sup> Psalm lxviii. 10.

§ 24.—*Our Lord and Nicodemus.*

St. John iii. 1—21.

And there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night, and said to Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art come a teacher from God, for no man can do these signs which Thou dost, unless God be with him.

Jesus answered, and said to him, Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith to Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again?

Jesus answered, Amen amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. Wonder not, that I said to thee, you must be born again. The Spirit

St. John iii. 8—16.

breatheth where He will, and thou hearest His voice, but thou knowest not whence He cometh, and whither He goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Nicodemus answered, and said to him, How can these things be done?

Jesus answered, and said to him, Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things? Amen, amen I say to thee, that We speak what We know, and We testify what We have seen, and you receive not Our testimony. If I have spoken to you earthly things, and you believe not, how will you believe, if I shall speak to you heavenly things? And no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended from heaven, the Son of Man Who is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten

St. John iii. 16—21.

Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not His Son into the world, to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him. He that believeth in Him is not judged. But he that doth not believe, is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, because the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil. For every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God.

§ 25.—*St. John bears witness that Christ is the Son of God.*

St. John iii. 22—36.

After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judæa, and there

St. John iii. 23—31.

He abode with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Ennon near Salim, because there was much water there, and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison.

And there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews concerning purification, and they came to John, and said to him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to Whom thou gavest testimony, behold He baptizeth, and all men come to Him.

John answered and said, A man cannot receive any thing, unless it be given him from heaven. You yourselves do bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh

St. John iii. 32—36.

from above, is above all. He that is of the earth, of the earth he is, and of the earth he speaketh. He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth, and no man receiveth His testimony. He that hath received His testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true. For He Whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God, for God doth not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loveth the Son, and He hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth in the Son, hath life everlasting, but he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

§ 26.—*Our Lord and the Samaritan Woman.*

St. John iv. 1—42.

When Jesus therefore understood that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus maketh more disciples, and baptizeth more than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),

St. John iv. 3—11.

He left Judæa, and went again into Galilee.

And He was of necessity to pass through Samaria. He cometh therefore to a city of Samaria, which is called Sichar, near the ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria, to draw water. Jesus saith to her, Give me to drink. For His disciples were gone into the city to buy food.

Then that Samaritan woman saith to Him, How dost thou, being a Jew, ask of me to drink, who am a Samaritan woman? For the Jews do not communicate with the Samaritans.

Jesus answered, and said to her, If thou didst know the gift of God, and Who He is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou perhaps wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.

The woman saith to Him,



St John iv. 11—19.

Sir, thou hast nothing wherein to draw, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

Jesus answered, and said to her, Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again; but he that shall drink of the water that I will give him, shall not thirst for ever, but the water that I will give him, shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up unto life everlasting.

The woman saith to Him, Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw.

Jesus saith to her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

The woman answered, and said, I have no husband.

Jesus said to her, Thou hast said well, I have no husband, for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband. This thou hast said truly. The woman saith to

St. John iv. 20—27.

Him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers adored on this mountain, and you say, that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore.

Jesus saith to her, Woman, believe Me, that the hour cometh, when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, adore the Father. You adore that which you know not, we adore that which we know, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore Him. God is a spirit, and they that adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and in truth.

The woman saith to Him, I know that the Messias cometh (Who is called Christ); therefore, when He is come, He will tell us all things.

Jesus saith to her, I am He, Who am speaking with thee.

And immediately His disciples came, and they wondered that He talked with the

St. John iv. 27—36.

woman. Yet no man said, What seekest Thou? or, why talkest Thou with her? The woman therefore left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men there, Come, and see a man who has told me all things whatsoever I have done. Is not He the Christ? They went therefore out of the city, and came unto Him.

In the mean time the disciples prayed Him, saying, Rabbi, eat. But He said to them, I have meat to eat, which you know not. The disciples therefore said one to another, Hath any man brought Him to eat?

Jesus saith to them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work. Do not you say, There are yet four months, and then the harvest cometh? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting, that both he that soweth, and he

St. John iv. 37—42.

that reapeth, may rejoice together. For in this is the saying true, That it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth. I have sent you to reap that in which you did not labour, others have laboured, and you have entered into their labours.

Now of that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him, for the word of the woman giving testimony, He told me all things whatsoever I have done. So when the Samaritans were come to Him, they desired Him that He would tarry there. And He abode there two days. And many more believed in Him because of His own word. And they said to the woman, We now believe, not for thy saying, for we ourselves have heard Him, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.

§ 27.—*Healing of the Nobleman's Son.*

St. John iv. 43—54.

Now after two days, He departed thence and went into Galilee. For Jesus Him-

St. John iv. 44—51.

self gave testimony that a prophet hath no honour in His own country.

And when He was come into Galilee, the Galilæans received Him, having seen all the things He had done at Jerusalem on the festival day, for they also went to the festival day. He came again therefore into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine.

And there was a certain ruler, whose son was sick at Capharnaum. He having heard that Jesus was come from Judæa into Galilee, went to Him, and prayed Him to come down, and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

Jesus therefore said to him, Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not.

The ruler saith to Him, Lord, come down before that my son die.

Jesus saith to him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. The man believed the word which Jesus said to him, and went his way. And as he was going down, his servants met

St. John iv. 52—54.

him, and they brought him word, saying, that his son lived. He asked therefore of them the hour wherein he grew better. And they said to him, Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him. The father therefore knew, that it was at the same hour that Jesus said to him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house.

This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He was come out of Judæa into Galilee.

§ 28.—*The Sabbath at Nazareth.*

St. Luke iv. 14—31.

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and the fame of Him went out through the whole country. And He taught in their synagogues, and was magnified by all.

And He came to Nazareth, where He was brought up, and He went into the synagogue, according to His custom, on the sabbath-day, and He rose up to read, and the book of Isaias the prophet was delivered unto Him. And

St. Luke iv. 17—23.

as He unfolded the book, he found the place where it was written, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, wherefore He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He hath sent Me to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captive, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward.'<sup>13</sup>

And when He had folded the book, He restored it to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

And He began to say to them, This day is fulfilled this scripture in your ears. And all gave testimony to Him, and they wondered at the words of grace that proceedeth from His mouth, and they said, Is not this the son of Joseph?

And He said to them, Doubtless you will say to Me this similitude, Physician, heal Thyself, as great things as we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in

St. Luke iv. 24—31.

Thy own country. And He said, Amen I say to you, that no prophet is accepted in his own country. In truth I say to you, there were many widows in the days of Elias in Israel, when heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there was a great famine throughout all the land, and to none of them was Elias sent, but to Sarepta of Sidon, to a widow woman. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed but Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, hearing these things, were filled with anger. And they rose up and thrust Him out of the city, and they brought Him to the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. But He passing through the midst of them, went His way. And He went down into Capharnaum, a city of Galilee, and there He taught them on the sabbath-days.

<sup>13</sup> Isaias lxi. 1, 2.

§ 29.—*Beginning of the preaching in Galilee, and call of four disciples.*

St. Matt. iv. 12—22.

Now when Jesus had heard that John was delivered up, He retired into Galilee. And leaving the city Nazareth He came and dwelt in Capharnaum on the sea-coast, in the confines of Zabulon and of Nephthalim, that what was said by Isaias the prophet might be fulfilled, 'the land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, the way of the sea beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people that sat in darkness saw great light, and to them that sat in the region of the shadow of death, light is sprung up.'<sup>14</sup> From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishers). And He saith to them, Come

St. Mark i. 14—20.

And after that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is accomplished, and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent, and believe the gospel.

And as He walked by the sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting nets into the sea (for they were fishermen). And Jesus said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you to

<sup>14</sup> Isaias ix. 1, 2.



St. Matt. iv. 19—22.

after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And they immediately, leaving their nets, followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and He called them. And they immediately, leaving their nets and their father, followed Him.

St. Mark i. 18—20.

become fishers of men. And immediately, leaving their nets, they followed Him. And going on from thence a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And forthwith He called them. And they left their father Zebedee in the ship with his hired men, and followed Him.

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§ 30.—*The Sabbath at Capharnaum.*

St. Matt. viii. 14—17.  
iv. 23—25.

St. Mark i. 21—39.

St. Luke iv. 31—44.

And they came into Capharnaum, and forthwith on the sabbath-day, going into the synagogue, He taught them. And they were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as One that had authority, and not as the Scribes.

And He went down into Capharnaum, a city of Galilee, and there He taught them on the sabbath days. And they were astonished at His doctrine, for His word was with power.

And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and

And in the synagogue there was a man who had an unclean devil, and

St. Matt.

St. Mark i. 24—28.

St. Luke iv. 34—37.

he cried out, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Who Thou art, the Holy One of God.

And Jesus threatened him, saying: Speak no more, and go out of the man. And the unclean spirit tearing him, and crying out with a loud voice, went out of him.

And they were all amazed, inso-much that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what is this new doctrine? for with authority He commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him. And the fame of Him was spread

he cried out with a loud voice, saying: Let us alone, what have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee Who Thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him saying, Hold thy peace, and go out of him. And when the devil had thrown him into the midst, he went out of him, and hurt him not at all.

And there came fear upon all, and they talked among themselves, saying, What word is this, for with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they go out? And the fame of Him was published in every place of the country.

St. Matt. viii. 14—17.

St. Mark i. 29—34.

St. Luke iv. 38—41.

forthwith through  
all the country of  
Galilee.

And when Jesus  
was come into Pe-  
ter's house, He saw  
his mother-in-law  
lying, and sick of  
a fever, and He  
touched her hand,  
and the fever left  
her, and she arose  
and ministered to  
them.

And immediately  
going out of the  
synagogue, they  
came into the  
house of Simon  
and Andrew, with  
James and John.  
And Simon's wife's  
mother lay sick  
of a fever, and  
forthwith they tell  
Him of her. And  
He came and lifted  
her up, taking her  
by the hand, and  
immediately the  
fever left her, and  
she ministered un-  
to them.

And Jesus rising  
up out of the  
synagogue, went  
into Simon's house.  
And Simon's wife's  
mother was taken  
with a great fever,  
and they besought  
Him for her. And  
standing over her,  
He commanded the  
fever, and it left  
her. And imme-  
diately rising, she  
ministered to them.

And when even-  
ing was come they  
brought to Him  
many that were  
possessed with de-  
vils, and He cast  
out the spirits with  
His word, and all  
that were sick He  
healed. That it  
might be fulfilled,  
which was spoken

And when it was  
evening, after sun-  
set, they brought  
all to Him that were  
diseased, and that  
were possessed  
with devils. And  
all the city was  
gathered together  
at the door. And  
He healed many  
that were sick of

And when the  
sun was down, all  
they that had any  
sick with divers dis-  
eases, brought them  
to Him. But He  
laying His hands  
on every one of  
them, healed them.  
And devils went  
out of many, cry-  
ing out and say-

St. Matt. viii. 17.

by the prophet  
Isaias, saying: 'He  
took our infirmi-  
ties, and bore our  
diseases.'<sup>15</sup>

St. Mark i. 34—38.

divers diseases :  
and He cast out  
many devils, and  
He suffered them  
not to speak, be-  
cause they knew  
Him.

And rising very  
early in the morn-  
ing, going out  
He went into a  
desert place, and  
there He prayed.  
And Simon, and  
they who were with  
Him, followed after  
Him. And when  
they had found Him  
they said to Him,  
All men seek for  
Thee. And He saith  
to them, Let us  
go into the neigh-  
bouring towns and  
cities, that I may  
preach there also,  
for to this purpose  
am I come.

St. Luke iv. 41—43.

ing, Thou art the  
Son of God. And  
He, rebuking them,  
suffered them not  
to speak, for they  
knew that He was  
Christ.

And when it was  
day, going out He  
went into a desert  
place, and the  
multitudes sought  
Him, and came to  
Him, and they de-  
tained Him, that He  
should not depart  
from them. And  
He said to them,  
I must preach the  
kingdom of God to  
other cities also, for  
therefore am I sent.

<sup>15</sup> Isaias liii. 4.

St. Matt. iv. 23—25.

St. Mark i. 39.

St. Luke iv. 44.

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all diseases and infirmities among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria, and they brought to Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and such as were possessed by devils, and lunatics, those that had the palsy, and He healed them. And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judæa, and from beyond the Jordan.

And He preached in their synagogues, and in all Galilee, and cast out devils.

And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.



§ 31.—*The Eight Beatitudes and the Light of the World.*

St. Matt. v. 1—16.

Now Jesus seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain, and when He had sat down, His disciples came to Him.

And opening His mouth He taught them, saying :

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek, 'for they shall possess the land.'<sup>16</sup>

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

'Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all

St. Matt. v. 12—16.

manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, because your reward is very great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets, that were before you.

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt have lost its savour, with what shall it be salted? It is then good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden upon by men.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.

§ 32.—*Evangelical Justice.*

St. Matt. v. 17—48.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For Amen I say unto you, till

<sup>16</sup> Psalm xxxvi. 11.

St. Matt. v. 19—23.

heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven, but whosoever shall do and teach, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your justice abound more than that of the Scribes and of the Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

You have heard that it was said to them of old: 'Thou shalt not kill.'<sup>17</sup> And whosoever shall kill, shall be guilty of the judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be guilty of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be guilty of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be guilty of hell fire. Therefore, if thou offerest thy gift at the

St. Matt. v. 24—28.

altar, and there shalt remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and first go to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Make an agreement with thy adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest, perhaps, the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou pay the last farthing.

You have heard that it was said to them of old, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.'<sup>18</sup> But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart. And if thy right eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And

<sup>17</sup> Exod. xx. 13.<sup>18</sup> Exod. xx. 14.

St. Matt. v. 29—36.

if thy right hand cause thee to offend, cut it off, and cast it from thee, for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish, than that thy whole body should go into hell.

It hath also been said: 'Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorce.'<sup>19</sup> But I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, excepting for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery.

Again, you have heard that it was said to them of old, 'Thou shalt not forswear thyself,'<sup>20</sup> but thou shalt perform thy oaths to the Lord.' But I say to you, not to swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, nor by the earth, for it is His footstool, nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But

St. Matt. v. 37—45.

let your speech be, Yea, yea, No, no: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh from evil.

You have heard that it hath been said,<sup>21</sup> 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, not to resist evil, but if any man strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall force thee to go one mile, go with him other two. Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not away.

You have heard that it hath been said,<sup>22</sup> Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thy enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your Father, Who is in heaven, Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon

<sup>19</sup> Deut. xxiv. 1.    <sup>20</sup> Num. xxx. 3.    <sup>21</sup> Exod. xxi. 24.    <sup>22</sup> Levit. xix. 18.

St. Matt. v. 46—48.

the just and the unjust. For if you love those that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? do not also the heathens the same? Be you, therefore, perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect.

§ 33.—*Alms, Prayer, and Fasting.*

St. Matt. vi. 1—18.

Take heed that you do not your justice before men, that you may be seen by them, otherwise you shall not have a reward from your Father, Who is in heaven.

Therefore, when thou doest an alms-deed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thy alms may be in secret, and thy

St. Matt. vi. 5—11.

Father, Who seeth in secret, will repay thee.

And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, who love to pray standing in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father, Who seeth in secret, will reward thee.

And when you are praying speak not much, as the heathens do, for they think that they are heard for their much speaking. Be not you, therefore, like them. For your Father knoweth what you stand in need of, before you ask him. You, therefore, shall pray in this manner :

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

St. Matt. vi. 12—18.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. Amen.

For if you forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will also forgive you your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your sins.

And when you fast, be not, as the hypocrites, sad : for they disfigure their faces, that to men they may appear fasting. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not fasting to men, but to thy Father, Who is in secret, and thy Father, Who seeth in secret, will reward thee.

§ 34.—*Confidence in God our Father.*

St. Matt. vi. 19—34.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where the rust, and the moth consume, and where thieves dig through

St. Matt. vi. 20—26.

and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither the rust nor the moth doth consume, and where thieves do not dig through, nor steal. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.

The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be simple, thy whole body will be lightsome. But if thy eye be evil, thy whole body shall be darksome. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great will the darkness itself be?

No man can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body more than the raiment? Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father



St. Matt. vi. 27—34.

feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And which of you, by thinking, can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they labour not, neither do they spin. And yet I say to you, that not even Solomon, in all his glory, was arrayed as one of these. Now, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not solicitous, therefore, saying, What shall we eat or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathen seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not, therefore, solicitous for to-morrow, for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

35.—*Against judging others, and of confidence in Prayer.*

St. Matt. vii. 1—12.

Judge not, that you may not be judged. For with what judgment you have judged, you shall be judged, and with what measure you have measured, it shall be measured to you again. And why seest thou a mote in thy brother's eye, and seest not a beam in thy own eye? Or how sayest thou to thy brother, Let me cast the mote out [of thy eye, and behold a beam is in thy own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and, turning upon you, tear you.

Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be

St. Matt. vii. 9—12.

opened. Or what man is there among you, of whom if his son ask bread, will he reach him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he reach him a serpent? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father, Who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask Him?

All things, therefore, whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them, for this is the law and the prophets.

§ 36.—*The narrow way to Life.*

St. Matt. vii. 13—29; viii. 1.

Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who enter by it. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way, which leadeth to life, and few there are who find it!

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly

St. Matt. vii. 16—24.

they are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree yieldeth good fruit, and the bad tree yieldeth bad fruit. A good tree cannot yield bad fruit, neither can a bad tree yield good fruit. Every tree that yieldeth not good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits you shall know them.

Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, Who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works in Thy name? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from Me, you that work iniquity.<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, whosoever heareth these My words, and doeth

<sup>23</sup> Psalm vi. 9.

St. Matt. vii. 15—29; viii. 1.

them, shall be likened to a wise man, who built his house upon a rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these My words, and doeth them not, shall be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had fully ended these words, the people were in admiration at His doctrine. For He was teaching them as One having authority, and not as their Scribes and Pharisees. And when He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.

§ 37.—*The miraculous draught of fishes.*

St. Luke v. 1—11.

And it came to pass that, when the multitudes pressed upon Him, to hear the Word of God, He stood by the lake

St. Luke v. 2—8.

of Genesareth. And He saw two ships standing by the lake, but the fishermen were gone out of them and were washing their nets. And going up into one of the ships that was Simon's, He desired him to thrust out a little from the land, and sitting down He taught the multitudes out of the ship.

Now when He had ceased to speak, He said to Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

And Simon answering, said to Him, Master we have laboured all the night, and have taken nothing, but at Thy word I will let down the net.

And when they had done this, they inclosed a very great multitude of fishes, and their net was breaking. And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking.

Which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from

St. Luke v. 9, 10.

me, for I am a sinful man,  
O Lord. For he was wholly  
astonished, and all that were  
with him, at the draught of  
the fishes which they had  
taken ; and so were also  
James and John, the sons of  
Zebedee, who were Simon's

St. Luke v. 11.

partners. And Jesus saith  
to Simon, Fear not, from  
henceforth thou shalt be  
taking men. And when they  
had brought their ships to  
land, leaving all things, the  
followed Him.

§ 38.—*The Healing of the Leper.*

St. Matt. viii. 2—4.

St. Mark i. 40—45.

St. Luke v. 12—16.

And behold a leper came and adored Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down, said to Him, If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

And it came to pass, when He was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy, who seeing Jesus, and falling on his face, besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

And Jesus stretching forth His hand, touched him, saying, I will, be thou made clean.

And Jesus having compassion on him, stretched forth His hand, and touching him, saith to him, I will, be thou made clean.

And stretching forth His hand, He touched him, saying, I will, be thou cleansed.

And forthwith his leprosy was cleansed.

And when He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean.

And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

And Jesus saith to him, See thou tell no man, but go, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift which Moses command-

And He strictly charged him, and forthwith sent him away. And He saith to him, See thou tell no one, but go, show thy-

And He charged him that he should tell no man, but, Go, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing according as



St. Matt. viii. 4.	St. Mark i. 44, 45.	St. Luke v. 15, 16.
ed for a testimony unto them.	self to the high- priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things that Moses command- ed for a testimony to them.	Moses command- ed for a testimony to them.

But he being gone out, began to publish and to blaze abroad the word; so that He could not openly go into the city, but was without in desert places, and they flocked to Him from all sides.	But the fame of Him went abroad the more, and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. And He retired into the desert, and prayed.
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§ 39.—*The Healing of the Paralytic and the calling of St. Matthew.*

St. Matt. ix. 1—9.	St. Mark ii. 1—14.	St. Luke v. 17—28.
And He came unto His own city.	And again He entered into Ca- pharnaum after some days. And it was heard that He was in the house, and many came together, so that there was no room, no, not even at the door, and	And it came to pass on a certain day, as He sat teaching, that there were also Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, that were come out of every town of Ga- lilee, and Judæa, and Jerusalem, and

St. Matt. ix. 2, 3.

And behold they brought to Him one sick of the palsy, lying on a bed.

And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy, Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee.

And behold some of the scribes said within themselves, He blasphemeth.

St. Mark ii. 3—7.

He spoke to them the word.

And they came to Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, who was carried by four.

And when they could not offer him unto Him for the multitude, they uncovered the roof where He was, and opening it, they let down the bed wherein the man sick of the palsy lay.

And when Jesus had seen their faith, He saith to the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven thee.

And there were some of the scribes sitting there, and thinking in their hearts, Why doth this Man speak

St. Luke v. 17—21.

the power of the Lord was to heal them.

And behold, men brought in bed a man who had the palsy, and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went up upon the roof, and let him down through the tiles, with his bed, into the midst before Jesus.

Whose faith when He saw, He said, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

And the scribes and Pharisees began to think, saying, Who is this who speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

St. Matt. ix. 4—8.

St. Mark ii. 7—12.

St. Luke v. 22—25.

thus? He blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God only?

And Jesus seeing their thoughts, said, Why do you think evil in your hearts?

Which Jesus presently knowing in His spirit, that they so thought within themselves, saith to them, Why think you these things in your hearts?

And when Jesus knew their thoughts, answering, He said to them, What is it you think in your hearts?

Whether is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?

Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk?

Which is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?

But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then said He to the man sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house.

But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He saith to the sick of the palsy), I say to thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house.

But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He saith to the sick of the palsy), I say to thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house.

And he arose, and went into his house. And the multitudes seeing it, feared, and glo-

And immediately he arose, and taking up his bed, went his way in the sight of all, so that all won-

And immediately rising up before them, he took up the bed on which he lay, and he went

St. Matt. ix. 8, 9.	St. Mark ii. 12--14.	St. Luke v. 25--28.
rified God that gave such power to men.	dered, and glorified God, saying, We never saw the like.	away to his own house, glorifying God. And all were astonished, and they glorified God. And they were fil- led with fear, say- ing, We have seen wonderful things to-day.

And He went  
forth again to the  
sea-side, and all  
the multitude came  
to Him, and He  
taught them.

And when Jesus passed on from thence, He saw a man sitting in the custom-house, named Matthew, and He saith to him, Follow Me. And he arose up and followed Him.	And when He was passing by, He saw Levi the son of Alpheus sit- ting at the receipt of custom, and He saith to Him, Fol- low Me. And rising up, he followed Him.	And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican named Levi sitting at the receipt of custom, and He said to him, Follow Me. And leaving all things, he rose up and followed Him.
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§ 40.—*The feast at St. Matthew's house.*

St. Matt. ix. 10--13.	St. Mark ii. 15--22.	St. Luke v. 29--39.
And it came to pass as He was sitting at meat in	And it came to pass, that as He sat at meat in his	And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house,

St. Matt. ix. 10—13.

the house, behold many publicans and sinners came, and sat down with Jesus and His disciples.

And the Pharisees seeing it, said to his disciples, Why doth your Master eat with publicans and sinners?

But Jesus hearing it, said, They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill.

Go then and learn what this meaneth, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice.'<sup>25</sup> For I am not come to call the just, but sinners.

St. Mark ii. 15—17.

house, many publicans and sinners sat down together with Jesus and His disciples. For they were many, who also followed Him.

And the scribes and the Pharisees seeing that He ate with publicans and sinners, said to His disciples, Why doth your Master eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

Jesus hearing this, saith to them, they that are well have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. For I came not to call the just, but sinners.

St. Luke v. 29—32.

and there was a great company of publicans, and of others, that were at table with them.

But the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying to His disciples, Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

And Jesus answering, said to them, They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick.

I came not to call the just, but sinners, to penance.

<sup>25</sup> Osee vi. 6.



St. Matt.

St. Mark ii. 18—21.

St. Luke v. 33—36.

And the disciples of John and the Pharisees used to fast, and they come, and say to Him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples do not fast?

And they said to Him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and the disciples of the Pharisees in like manner; but Thine eat and drink?

And Jesus saith to them, Can the children of the marriage fast, as long as the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast in those days.

To whom He said, Can you make the children of the bridegroom fast, whilst the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, then shall they fast in those days.

No man seweth a piece of raw cloth to an old garment, otherwise the new piecing taketh away from the old,

And He spoke also a similitude to them, That no man putteth a piece from a new garment upon an

St. Matt.

St. Mark ii. 21, 22.

St. Luke v. 36—39.

and there is made  
a greater rent.

old garment, other-  
wise he both rend-  
eth the new, and  
the piece taken  
from the new  
agreeth not with  
the old.

And no man  
putteth new wine  
into old bottles,  
otherwise the wine  
will burst the bot-  
tles, and both the  
wine will be spilled  
and the bottles will  
be lost. But new  
wine must be put  
into new bottles.

And no man  
putteth new wine  
into old bottles,  
otherwise the new  
wine will break the  
bottles, and it will  
be spilled, and the  
bottles will be lost.  
But new wine must  
be put into new  
bottles, and both  
are preserved. And  
no man drinking  
old, hath presently  
a mind to new, for  
he saith, The old is  
better.

§ 41.—*The miracle at the  
Probatia Pool.*

St. John v. 1—15.

After these things was a festival day of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now there is at Jerusalem a pond, called Probatia, which in Hebrew is named Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick, of blind, of lame, of withered, waiting for the moving of the water. And an Angel of the Lord descended at certain times into the pond, and the water was moved. And he that went down first into the pond after the motion of the water, was made whole of whatsoever infirmity he lay under.

And there was a certain man there, that had been eight and thirty years under his infirmity. Him when Jesus had seen lying, and knew that he had been now a long time, He saith to him, Wilt thou be made whole?

The infirm man answered Him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond. For

St. John v. 8—15.

whilst I am coming, another goeth down before me.

Jesus saith to him, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk.

And immediately the man was made whole, and he took up his bed, and walked. And it was the sabbath that day. The Jews therefore said to him that was healed, It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, He said to me, Take up thy bed, and walk. They asked him therefore, Who is that Man Who said to thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? But he who was healed knew not Who it was, for Jesus went aside from the multitude standing in the place.

Afterwards, Jesus findeth him in the Temple, and saith to him, Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee. The man went his way, and told the Jews, that it was Jesus Who made him whole.

§ 42.—*Our Lord's dispute  
with the Jews.*

St. John v. 16—47.

Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, because He did these things on the sabbath.

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh until now, and I work.

Hereupon therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He did not only break the sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal to God.

Then Jesus answered, and said to them, Amen, amen, I say unto you, the Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing, for what things soever He doth, these the Son also doth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things which Himself doth, and greater works than these will He show Him, that you may wonder. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life to whom He will. For neither doth the Father

St. John v. 23—29.

judge any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son, that all men may honour the Son, as they honour the Father. He who honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father Who hath sent Him.

Amen, amen, I say unto you, that he who heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath life everlasting, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say unto you, that the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so He hath given to the Son also to have life in Himself, And He hath given Him power to do judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Wonder not at this, for the hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good things, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil,

St. John v. 30—37.

unto the resurrection of judgment. I cannot of Myself do anything. As I hear, so I judge, and My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.

If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of Me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of Me is true. You sent to John, and he gave testimony to the truth. But I receive not testimony from man, but I say these things, that you may be saved. He was a burning and a shining light, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

But I have a greater testimony than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given Me to perfect, the works themselves, which I do, give testimony of Me, that the Father hath sent Me. And the Father Himself Who hath sent Me, hath given testimony of Me. Neither have you heard His voice at any time, nor seen

St. John v. 38—47.

His shape. And you have not His word abiding in you, for Whom He hath sent, Him you believe not.

Search the Scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting, and the same are they that give testimony of Me. And you will not come to Me that you may have life. I receive not glory from men. 'But I know you, that you have not the love of God in you. I am come in the name of My Father, and you receive Me not, if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive glory one from another, and the glory which is from God alone, you do not seek? Think not that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one that accuseth you, Moses, in whom you trust. For if you did believe Moses, you would perhaps believe Me also, for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?



§ 43.—*The disciples plucking the corn on the Sabbath.*

St. Matt. xii. 1—8.

St. Mark ii. 23—28.

St. Luke vi. 1—5.

At that time Jesus went through the corn on the sabbath, and His disciples being hungry, began to pluck the ears, and to eat.

And it came to pass, again, as the Lord walked through the corn-fields on the sabbath, that His disciples began to go forward, and to pluck the ears of corn.

And it came to pass, on the second first sabbath, that as He went through the corn-fields, His disciples plucked the ears, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

And the Pharisees seeing them, said to Him, Behold, Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-days.

And the Pharisees said to Him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath-day that which is not lawful?

And some of the Pharisees said to them, Why do you that which is not lawful on the sabbath-days?

But He said to them, Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and they that were with him? How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the loaves of proposition, which it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for them that were with him, but

And He said to them, Have you never read what David did when he had need, and was hungry himself, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God, under Abiathar the high-priest, and did eat the loaves of proposition, which was not lawful to

And Jesus answering them, said, Have you not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was hungry, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God, and took and ate the bread of proposition, and gave to them that were with him, which is

St. Matt. xii. 5—8.	St. Mark ii. 26—28.	St. Luke vi. 4, 5.
for the priests only?	eat, but for the	not lawful to eat
Or have ye not	priests, and gave	but only for the
read in the law,	to them who were	priests?
that on the sab-	with him?	
bath-days the		
priests in the Tem-		
ple break the sab-		
bath, and are with-		
out blame? But		
I tell you, that		
there is here a		
greater than the		
Temple.		

And if you knew	And He said to
what this meaneth,	them, The sabbath
I will have mercy,	was made for man,
and not sacrifice,	and not man for
you would never	the sabbath.
have condemned	
the innocent.	

For the Son of	Therefore the	And He said to
Man is Lord even	Son of Man is	them, The Son of
of the sabbath.	Lord of the sab-	Man is Lord also
	bath also.	of the sabbath.

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§ 44.—*Another miracle on the Sabbath.*

St. Matt. xii. 9—14.	St. Mark iii. 1—6.	St. Luke vi. 6—11.
And when He	And He entered	And it came to
had passed from	again into the	pass also on an-
thence, He came	synagogue, and	other sabbath, that
into their syna-	there was a man	He entered into
gogue. And behold	there who had a	the synagogue, and
there was a man	withered hand.	taught. And there

St. Matt. xii. 10—13.

who had a withered hand, and they asked Him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse Him.

St. Mark iii. 2—5.

And they watched Him whether He would heal on the sabbath-days, that they might accuse Him.

St. Luke vi. 7—10.

was a man, whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and Pharisees watched if He would heal on the sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him.

But He said to them, What man shall there be among you, that hath one sheep, and if the same fall into a pit on the sabbath-day, will he not take hold on it and lift it up? How much better is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do a good deed on the sabbath-days. Then He saith to the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth, and it was restored to health even as the other.

And He said to the man who had the withered hand, Stand up in the midst. And He saith to them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy? But they held their peace. And looking round about on them with anger, being grieved for the blindness of their hearts, He saith to the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth, and his hand was restored unto him.

But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, Arise, and stand forth in the midst. And rising he stood forth. Then Jesus said to them, I ask you, if it be lawful on the sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil, to save life, or to destroy? And looking round about on them all, He said to the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth, and his hand was restored.

St. Matt. xii. 14.

And the Pharisees going out made a consultation against Him, how they might destroy Him.

St. Mark iii. 6.

And the Pharisees going out immediately, made a consultation with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

St. Luke vi. 11.

And they were filled with madness, and they talked one with another, what they might do to Jesus.

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§ 45.—*Our Lord retiring before His enemies.*

St. Matt. xii. 15—21.

But Jesus knowing it, retired from thence, and many followed Him, and He healed them all. He charged them that they should not make Him known.

St. Mark iii. 7—12.

But Jesus retired with His disciples to the sea, and a great multitude followed Him from Galilee and Judæa, And from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and from beyond the Jordan. And they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing the things which He did, came to Him.

And He spoke to His disciples that a small ship should wait on Him because of the multitude, lest they should throng Him. For He healed many, so that they pressed upon Him for to touch Him, as many as had evils. And the unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and they

St. Matt. xii. 17—21.

St. Mark iii. 11, 12.

cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. And He strictly charged them that they should not make Him known.

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaias the prophet, saying, 'Behold My servant Whom I have chosen, My beloved in Whom My soul hath been well pleased. I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not contend, nor cry out, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. The bruised reed He shall not break, and smoking flax He shall not extinguish, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name the Gentiles shall hope.'<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Isaias xlii. 1.



## NOTE I.

*Harmonistic questions as to the first period of our Lord's Public Life.*

THE difficulties which present themselves to any reverent student of the Gospels who endeavours to arrange a complete Harmony of their statements as to our Lord's actions are neither few nor unimportant, but it is at the same time fair to say that they are often glossed over and as often exaggerated. They are glossed over by many writers, who make too little of the distinct and, as we must suppose, careful statements of the Evangelists in relating circumstances which are really different, but which, having one or two points in common, are considered by the writers in question to be identical, notwithstanding apparent discrepancies. They are exaggerated by others, who are not content with acknowledging their own inability to reconcile an apparent difference, but go on further to declare that the several accounts are absolutely irreconcilable. And yet it will, as we hope, be seen that, while there are none which are plainly hopeless there, are very few which do not yield to patience if right principles are once adopted by those who endeavour to solve them.

Something has been said in another part of this work as to what these right principles are, drawn, as they ought to be, from a careful study of the objects and method of each of the several Evangelists. Our purpose here will be sufficiently answered, if enough is said to justify the method according to which the arrangement adopted in the present Harmony has been drawn up. We proceed to speak as shortly as possible of the difficulties which occur in the section of the Life of our Lord with which we are now occupied. These may be considered as the following (1) The order of the Temptations of our Lord, § 18. (2) The cleansing of the Temple, § 23. (3) The rejection of our Lord at Nazareth, § 28. (4) The call of the four disciples, §§ 29, 37. (5) Some circumstances which are connected with the banquet of St. Matthew, § 40.

I. *The order of the Temptations* (§ 18).

It is well known that St. Matthew and St. Luke give the three temptations in a different order. The first is the same in each, the second and third in St. Matthew are third and second in St. Luke.

Neither Evangelist need be considered as asserting that his own order is that in which the Temptations actually took place. But there are reasons for thinking that St. Luke, as a rule, follows the order of time, and that St. Matthew frequently follows the order of ideas. It is therefore safe to suppose that St. Luke's order is the historical order. The reasons which may have induced St. Matthew to invert the order of the two last temptations will be found in another volume of this work, *The Ministry of St. John*, Note iii. (p. 77), *On the Order of the Temptations*; but even if those reasons should seem inadequate, it would only follow that we have not discovered what may still have existed. The principle as to the more methodical and historical arrangement of St. Luke is enough to justify us in following his order.

2. *The cleansing of the Temple* (§ 23).

St. John tells us (c. iii.) that our Lord purged the Temple at the Pasch, which he alone mentions, which is reckoned as the first in the Public Life. The other three Evangelists agree in telling us that He purged the Temple in the same way after He had entered Jerusalem in triumph on Palm Sunday (see St. Matt. c. xxi., St. Mark c. xi., St. Luke c. xix., and below, § 134).

This can only be a difficulty to those who insist on believing that the four Evangelists are all speaking of one and the same occasion. It is, however, certain that our Lord on more than one occasion repeated an action which He had performed before, and it is well that this should be borne in mind in other difficulties—so to call them—of the same kind as that before us. It is also certain that St. John, in the part of his Gospel in which this narrative occurs, is supplementing what had been left untold by his predecessors. Moreover, the entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday is

the only incident in our Lord's Life, previous to the Passion, which St. John mentions after it had been related by the other three Evangelists, except the great miracle of the five loaves. It is therefore natural to suppose that if the incident of the cleansing of the Temple of which he speaks had belonged to the same year as the entrance on Palm Sunday, he would have related it in the same place, especially as it has a direct reference to the charge made against our Lord before His judges about destroying the Temple. Again, the circumstances of the two cleansings, though very similar, are not identical, and on that account it would be against the reverence which we owe to the Evangelical narratives to confound them unnecessarily.

### 3. *The rejection of our Lord at Nazareth* (§ 28).

St. Luke puts at the very beginning of the Ministry the visit of our Lord to Nazareth and the scene in the synagogue when He applied to Himself the prophecy of Isaias concerning the Messiah, and afterwards refused to perform any miracle there, together with the attempt which followed to hurl Him from the Mount of Precipitation. St. Matthew and St. Mark relate a similar visit a good deal later on in the story of the Ministry (see St. Matt. xiii., St. Mark iv., and below, § 60). This is enough to make some writers imagine a discrepancy between St. Luke on the one hand and St. Matthew and St. Mark on the other. Here again two things must be remembered. First, St. Luke seems all through, whether from a wish that nothing which happened to our Lord should remain untold, or for some other reason, to choose when it is possible rather to relate things similar to what have been already related by the other Evangelists, than to repeat the same incidents exactly. Secondly, it is impossible to suppose that if the incident which he has related took place at a later time than that at which he has placed it, he would have altered the historical order. On the other hand, we must remember that a visit of our Lord's to Nazareth might well have happened more than once, and that there is no reason for thinking that St. Matthew and St. Mark would both

have transposed to a later period the scene mentioned by St. Luke, if it had been the same with that which they themselves relate. Again, there are differences in the two stories, and that which they have in common is exactly what would have happened on any occasion on which our Lord visited Nazareth. These differences are too obvious to need pointing out. It is therefore contrary to the best principles of Harmony to suppose that the three Evangelists speak of one and the same visit. This is a case in which to consider the two as identical is to gloss over the difficulties contained in these differences. To do this is to suppose, for instance, that our Lord worked some few miracles at Nazareth after He had refused to work any, and that St. Matthew and St. Mark pass over, as of little importance, the attempt made on His life. For in the narratives of these two Evangelists there is no mention at all of such an attempt, and they both assert that He worked some cures at Nazareth.

4. *The call of the four disciples, and the miraculous draught of fishes (§ 29, 37).*

If it were not for the number of excellent commentators who have considered it possible that the incident related by St. Luke c. v. (§ 37), may be the same as that mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark at the very beginning of the Public Ministry of our Lord, it would seem almost needless to point out the many discrepancies in the two stories which must be slurred over in order to make them one. In truth, the place, the persons, and a few words of our Lord to St. Peter, are the same, or nearly the same, in each case, while the differences are numerous, striking, and irreconcilable. In one case our Lord is walking, in another He is standing; in one case the ships are on the sea, in the other on the shore; in the one case they are seen one after another, in the other together; in one case the fishermen are in their ships, in the other they have left them; in the one case they are letting, or preparing to let down their nets, in the other they are washing them on the shore; in one case they are separate, in the other together; in one case



our Lord speaks from the land, in the other while on the sea; and the call is distinct to the two pairs of brothers in the one case, while it is not distinct in the other. The words also are different; the abandonment made by the disciples is different, and in the one case it is after an invitation, in the other without invitation. The list of differences might perhaps be augmented. But it ought to be enough to add that in St. Luke the people are present—having evidently heard our Lord before—and they are taught by our Lord from the ship, in the other two Evangelists the call takes place before our Lord has begun His Ministry of Preaching, and in St. Luke there is a great miracle subjoined, which supplies the Apostles with their motive for leaving all things. In St. Matthew and St. Mark there is no miracle, and the Apostles obey the call made on them without further evidence.

We have here, therefore, another instance of the method followed by St. Luke. It would have been a great loss to the Church if he had not so carefully gathered up incidents and sayings of our Lord which, from their very similarity to what had been related by the other Evangelists, had been omitted by them. And it is reasonable to suppose that, from his great love for the order of time, he has put this incident just in its right place in the narrative of our Lord's first year of preaching.

5. *Some circumstances connected with the banquet of St. Matthew (§ 40).*

We have here an instance of a difficulty as to arrangement which may be settled in either of two ways, between which there is really not very much to choose. In such cases a Harmonist must necessarily make a choice: but it ought to be understood that if, in consequence of that necessity, he places a certain incident in one place and not in another, he does not mean that there is any absolute certainty in the matter.

The difficulty here is the following—St. Matthew in his ninth chapter, the greater part of which is occupied with the continuation of the chain of miracles of various kinds which



he has collected from different facts of our Lord's Ministry in Galilee, gives us the following incidents in succession : (1) Our Lord's return from the further side of the lake, after the miracle in the land of the Gerasenes, and the stilling of the tempest. (2) The cure of the paralytic, in proof of the power of the Son of Man to forgive sins. (3) The call of Levi, or St. Matthew himself. (4) Our Lord's sitting at meat in the house with publicans and sinners, and the Pharisees' objections made to His disciples. (5) The question of the disciples of St. John Baptist as to fasting. (6) The petition of Jairus made 'while He was yet speaking to them,' that our Lord will come and heal his daughter. (7) The cure of the woman with the issue of blood. (8) The raising of the daughter of Jairus. (9) The cure of two blind men and one dumb demoniac. These incidents are not all connected in the text of St. Matthew, except by juxtaposition, and the order of ideas. The return from the other side of the lake is simply the completion of what St. Matthew has just finished relating, that is, the miracle of the stilling the tempest. The cure of the paralytic is not connected with this, except that they both form links in a chain of miracles. But the cure of the paralytic is connected with the call of St. Matthew, and the call of St. Matthew with the banquet, and the complaint about eating and drinking with publicans and sinners. The question about the disciples of St. John, which St. Matthew gives in words somewhat different from those used by St. Mark and St. Luke, is connected with the other question as to eating with sinners by resemblance of subject, but not by any direct particle of conjunction. Here, then, there is another break in the connection of St. Matthew. But he distinctly connects the petition of Jairus with the question of the disciples of St. John, by saying that Jairus came while our Lord was speaking to them.

On the other hand, St. Mark and St. Luke separate this chain of incidents by a considerable interval, dividing it into two parts. The cure of the paralytic, the call of St. Matthew, the banquet in his house, the complaint about publicans and sinners, and the question about fasting, belong to the first period of our Lord's preaching, that is, the period before the

persecution on account of the Sabbath day had set in. The return from the other side of the lake, the petition of Jairus, the cure of the issue of blood, the raising to life of the daughter of Jairus, and the rest, belong to the second period, that is, the time after the persecution had begun.

There is no difficulty at all about the anticipation by St. Matthew of the incidents which he has seemed to put earlier than they are put by the others, because it is clear that he does not pretend to follow the order of time, and is simply collecting the various links of his chain of miracles. But there is an apparent difficulty in the words by which he has connected the question about fasting, which the other Evangelists have placed in connection with his banquet, which seems to have occurred at the earlier period, with the petition of Jairus, which they have placed at the later period. There are thus two sets of incidents, separated from one another as to time by St. Mark and St. Luke, which seem to be connected together and fixed to one time by St. Matthew. The connecting link, as it appears, is the question about the fasting of the disciples of St. John.

We have here another instance of an incident which probably occurred a great many times over in the course of our Lord's Public Ministry. He was always eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, and His indulgence in not insisting upon fasting for His disciples was well known. And it was evidently His way to answer such objections as those here recorded by a short proverbial saying, which was the same at different times. As has been already said, the difficulty before us is solved in either of two ways with almost equal ease. Either there was but one occasion on which the objection about our Lord's eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, and about His seeming laxity as to fasting was urged, or there were more than one. Or perhaps the first objection was urged once, and the other twice or more. If we adopt the former supposition, then we must place at least the latter objection where St. Matthew has placed it, and consequently in the second year of the ministry. In that case it must be supposed that St. Mark and St. Luke have placed it where they have, out of its place, on account of the close resemblance which the two objections bear

one to the other. If we suppose this objection at least to have been made more than once, both at the time of St. Matthew's banquet, and at the time of the return from the land of the Gerasenes, it must be considered that St. Mark and St. Luke have spoken of the first occasion, and St. Matthew of the second, that Evangelist having been led to mention the second occasion where he has on account of the same resemblance, and then to have returned to the chain of miracles on which he is occupied. It may certainly be allowed that it is not contrary to St. Matthew's manner to be led from one subject to another by such a resemblance of ideas.

But the reason for thinking that the order and connection in which these incidents are placed by St. Mark and St. Luke are more likely to be the true chronological order and connection than those of St. Matthew, is obvious. The two first named Evangelists usually follow the order of time, and could have had no reason for deviating from it. St. Matthew, on the other hand, frequently inverts the order of time, as he has certainly inverted it in this very passage, placing the cure of the paralytic and his own call after the return from the further side of the lake. There is also another reason for thinking that, as to the question about fasting, St. Matthew is speaking of a different occasion from that spoken of by the others. In St. Mark and St. Luke the question is raised concerning the disciples of St. John, but not by them. In St. Matthew it is raised by the disciples of St. John themselves. It will be seen below that it is not impossible that, when our Lord returned from the other side of the lake, St. John was already dead. But at all events the incident of our Lord's return from the other side of the lake took place after St. John had sent his disciples to our Lord to ask if He were the Christ. Now there is no instance of his disciples coming to our Lord, until they were sent by him with this question, during his life time. After his death they seem at once to have put themselves in close relation with our Lord. And it seems more likely that they would have addressed themselves to our Lord with the question of which St. Matthew here speaks after that embassy than before.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *Second Period of our Lord's Public Life.*

WE are now to enter on the history of the central period of our Lord's Public Life, a period which occupied, it seems, something more than a year in point of time, beginning with the comparative retirement of our Lord from the public gaze in consequence of the persecution raised against Him on the pretext of His disrespect for the Sabbath, and ending with the confession of St. Peter, in the name of the Apostles, that He was 'the Christ, the Son of the Living God.' We speak of a comparative retirement of our Lord, but this must not be understood as if He had given up during this time the habit of constantly preaching to the people and of going about from place to place throughout Galilee. But He seems to have kept more aloof than before from Capharnaum, and other places where His enemies might be expecting Him. Perhaps also He changed His place of abode more frequently, and He appears also to have hung upon the outskirts of the Holy Land more than before, for we find Him approaching Tyre and Sidon, and the confession of St. Peter itself was made at a very remote spot to the extreme north of the country.

This retirement of our Lord from before His enemies does not appear in any way to have softened their hostility. On the contrary, we find that every opportunity is seized by them to bring charges against Him, to outrage and calumniate Him, to attempt to entrap



Him by insidious questions, and the like. We find here and there, now as at a later time, friendly Pharisees among the local priests and doctors, but the hostility of the ecclesiastics at Jerusalem seems to have been vigilant and relentless, and their emissaries haunted His footsteps and were always ready for Him at spots where He might have been expected to show Himself. It is not wonderful therefore, that we should find this period marked also by another feature in our Lord's conduct which indicates an advance towards the formation of the new society which He was to found. We cannot doubt that in the Providence of God a way could have been found in which the organization of the new kingdom, with its law, its hierarchy, its sacrifice, its sacraments and its priesthood, might have seemed to grow out of the Jewish institutions themselves without any violent rupture or antagonism between the ancient and the new dispensations. What use might have been made by our Lord of the ecclesiastical system of Judaism, if its rulers had thrown themselves at His feet instead of becoming His persecutors, it is impossible for us to divine. But it is significant that just at the time when their hostility becomes so pronounced and so unscrupulous as to lead to plots and combinations against His life, He seems to take steps which He had not hitherto taken towards the formation of a body or a community of His own. It is at the point of time which we have now reached that the formal selection of the Twelve Apostles is placed by the Evangelists, and it is clear that from this time up to that of the confession of St. Peter and the promise of the foundation of the Church, our Lord's attention was concentrated in an especial manner and degree upon those who were to become the founders of that Church after Him. A very considerable part of the sayings and teachings of this period was devoted to His Apostles



alone, and we shall see that before its close they are sent out to preach in our Lord's name, after very particular instructions from Him, and after having received the gift of miracles in order to authenticate their preaching.

Another characteristic of this period is an alteration in our Lord's method in dealing with the people at large. There never seems to have been a time when He lost His wonderful charm and power in their eyes. But the continuance of His preaching in Galilee must have taken away the freshness of His influence, and there must have been very many who had heard Him without profiting by what they heard, with whom, according to the inevitable law which prevails in the spiritual order, opportunities neglected and warnings unheeded revenged themselves, as it were, in increasing hardness and dulness of heart. There may also have been some who grew colder towards Him in proportion as it became apparent that He was in disfavour with the ecclesiastical authorities. The power of the rulers at Jerusalem was very great, as we see both in our Lord's own Life and in the history of the Acts, and when this influence was thrown continually and strongly into the scale against Him, there must have been very many whom it would tend to drive away from Him. Our Lord met this difference in the people by a change in the manner of His teaching which is noticed as important by each of the three historical Evangelists. He began to teach them by parables only. This form of teaching has the great advantage of being intelligible to those who are attentive and diligent, and whose hearts are eager for Divine truth, while it conveys comparatively little or nothing to those who are taken up with worldly cares, or who are the servants of passion. Thus it avoids the danger of which our Lord spoke in His Sermon on the Mount, of what, using at the time a parabolic image,

He called casting pearls before swine, and giving that which is holy to dogs. Again, such a method of teaching is a shield against any malevolence which may exist in a part of the audience, and on more than one occasion, as we shall see, must have baffled our Lord's enemies, watchful and insidious as they were.

The subject matter of our Lord's teaching by parables was also different from that of which the Sermon on the Mount treats, although we have several later parables in the Gospels which seem to have the same scope, such as that of the Unmerciful Servant or the Ten Virgins. But in general the parables, especially the first great cluster of them which begins with the Parable of the Sower, seem intended to sketch certain great truths as to the character of God as manifested in the government of the world, and also the manner in which men receive and deal with the graces and mercies which are offered to them by God. These were subjects which, especially from the time when the opposition to our Lord took the form of calumnies which imputed His miraculous works to the agency of Satan, and so involved the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, He did not wish either to hide from those whose hearts were still sound, or to thrust without reserve upon the notice of those to whom they would do harm, or whom they might prompt to still more violent hostility.

One other feature of this stage of the Public Life may be mentioned generally, before proceeding to a short outline of its details. It was not only the time of some of our Lord's most splendid miracles, but of some of the great triumphs of grace which gave special consolation to His Heart. Thus the miracle on the centurion's servant, as we shall see, brought out an instance of faith such as had not been found in Israel. It was now that Magdalene came to our Lord's feet, to seek no cure

from disease or suffering, but simply the pardon for her sins. It was now that the woman with the issue of blood gladdened Him by her faith, that if she could but touch the hem of His garment she should be made whole. It was now also that the Syrophœnician woman won from Him, as an extraordinary favour beyond the range of His special mission, the healing of her daughter, by saying that the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the children's table. And lastly, it was now that St. Peter made his great Confession. There are also traces of a different feature in the picture, which was sure to manifest itself under the circumstances of the time—a want of, or imperfection in, faith, which made some miracles difficult, as at Nazareth, and in the case of the blind man at Bethsaida. But other miracles of this time are the most striking of any, except that of the raising of Lazarus. To this time belong the raising from the dead of the widow's son and the daughter of Jairus, the stilling of the tempest, the casting out of the legion of devils, the twice-repeated miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, and the walking on the waters. We may now proceed to sketch as briefly as possible the incidents of this time in their chronological order.

It appears likely that our Lord returned to Galilee very soon after the Feast of the Pasch, at which, as has been seen, the miracle on the impotent man at the Pool was worked. If a few weeks passed before He took the step of retiring from the face of the persecution which now set in against Him, it is lawful to think that the next great event of which we have a distinct record took place about the time of the Feast of Pentecost. This would be very nearly a year after the beginning of our Lord's Galilæan preaching. The selection of the Twelve was thus made at the time of a

feast which, but two years after this date, was to be signalized by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them and the first great outburst of the Gospel preaching, and which has been perpetuated, even to its name, in the Christian Church, and marks one of the seasons of the year when she gives herself to special prayer in order to win the graces which they need for her candidates for the sacred ministry.<sup>1</sup> As in so many other cases, when a great step in the formation of the Christian kingdom was to be taken, our Lord spent the night before the choice of the Apostles in prayer. He was on a mountain or in some mountainous tract, and the multitudes of His disciples, still following His footsteps, must have been near Him. In the morning, then, after His prayer, He chose the Twelve. The Evangelists speak of the election as an exercise of His sovereign authority over souls, which no one disputed. He called to Him whom He would, and His disciples came to Him. He used the power which was inherent in Him as the Incarnate Son. His call was what the Church has ever since called 'a vocation,' and it could come from no one but Himself. There may have been some solemn words or actions with which He selected the Twelve, and with which He conferred upon them the power of healing diseases and of casting our devils. These were graces bestowed on the Apostles for the purpose of their special vocation, which was twofold, to be with Him as the members of a religious community and to be sent by Him to preach. At the same time He conferred upon Simon the name of Cephas or Peter, which He had promised him when he first became His disciple. The name would not have been given without some office, and some grace attached to it in regard of that office, and from this time the

<sup>1</sup> § 46. St. Mark xiii. 19; St. Luke vi. 12—16.



Evangelists always speak of him as Peter, and place him at the head of the Apostolic band. At the same time He gave the two sons of Zebedee the famous name of Boanerges, sons of Thunder.

Two out of three catalogues of the Apostles which occur in the Gospels, so far place their names in the order, as it seems, of their direct personal vocation, as to insert no name prior to those of the first five, of whose call we have special mention in the history. Thus the first seven are Peter and Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew (or Nathanael), and Matthew, though that Evangelist in his ingenious humility, places St. Thomas seventh and himself eighth. After the eight come the Apostles who seem to have been near relatives of our Lord, and the last is always Judas Iscariot, 'the traitor.' It would be foreign to our purpose here to dwell on the characters of the Twelve, as far as they can be divined from the hints, in most cases very scanty, which are to be found in the Gospel history. They are divided in the lists into six pairs, and it appears that they were usually sent by our Lord two and two, either to preach, or on any special mission, except in the significant case in which St. Peter was sent alone to fish that he might pay the didrachma for the temple service for our Lord and himself. The place of the choice of the Apostles, as has been said, was a mountain, and as soon as the choice was made, as it appears, our Lord came down into the plain below, and delivered to the multitude there collected the discourse, which from the place, specified by St. Luke, is commonly known as the Sermon on the Plain.<sup>2</sup> This sermon is very far from being a mere repetition of the Sermon on the Mount, though it goes over to a great extent the same range of subjects as that sermon. The differences

<sup>2</sup> §§ 47, 48, 49. St. Luke vi. 17—49.



between the two are in the main such as seem to have been naturally occasioned by two circumstances—first, the check, so to call it, which our Lord had received from the hostility now displayed towards Him by the ecclesiastical authorities, and to some extent by the people, and, secondly, the more promiscuous character of the assembly to which this sermon was addressed. The Sermon on the Mount we have supposed to be delivered to a large concourse of disciples gathered together in the course of the first great circuit of our Lord throughout Galilee. They must have been chiefly Jews, and had evidently already made considerable progress as disciples of our Lord. The Sermon on the Plain was delivered, as it appears, to a concourse of people who had come together, perhaps in the course of a shorter and more partial circuit through a part of Galilee near the sea, among whom there were many Gentiles. St. Luke describes the multitude as from Jerusalem and Judæa, from the sea country, and from Tyre and Sidon.

It is probably to the presence of so many Gentiles that we must ascribe the omission in this second sermon of numerous subjects which had found a place in the Sermon on the Mount, and which had a distinct reference to the Jewish system and to the Law of Moses. The sermon is divided into two main parts of unequal length, the first of which is said to have been addressed more particularly to the disciples as such, and contains four Beatitudes and four corresponding woes, while the second part is addressed to ‘you who hear,’ as if our Lord had then turned to the more general audience. This last part contains the precepts of the love of enemies, of mercy, of abstaining from judgment of others, and the like, and it ends, like the Sermon on the Mount, with the parabolic image of the house on the rock and the house on the sand, applied to the two classes of the

hearers of our Lord. But throughout the Sermon on the Plain there is a marked absence of that free loving mention of God as our Father which characterizes the Sermon on the Mount. The word Father only occurs once, and then in a passage parallel to that in which the goodness of our Father in heaven, in His mercy and bountifulness to His disobedient children, is drawn out with far greater distinctness in the other sermon. It is also to be noticed that the Lord's Prayer is omitted, as well as all the directions about performing the great duties of religion with the intention of pleasing our Father Who is in secret, and the earnest injunctions to perfect reliance on the Providence of the same most loving Father.

We have supposed this Sermon on the Plain to have been delivered by our Lord soon after the feast of Pentecost in this second year of His Preaching. We have no certain note of time by which to fix the occurrences which are mentioned in the Evangelical narratives as following; but it was so much our Lord's method to take the subject of His discourses from what was going on before the eyes of His hearers, as to make very probable the conjecture that the beginning of His formal teaching in parables took place when the seed time was beginning in the later months of the same year. Between this date and that of the Sermon on the Plain it seems that our Lord was engaged in another circuit of Galilee, in which He avoided Capharnaum and the places where He was likely to meet with His enemies, except occasionally. St. Luke mentions this circuit at the time,<sup>3</sup> and adds that our Lord was accompanied by the Twelve and also by a band of pious women, who provided for the necessities of the little community out of their substance. There are some circumstances mentioned as

<sup>3</sup> § 55. St. Luke viii. 1—3.

occurring in the interval, before the beginning of the parabolic teaching, which must now be shortly noticed.

Our Lord was again in Capharnaum—we may suppose, only for a very short time—after the appointment of the Twelve and the Sermon on the Plain. As soon as His arrival was known, a circumstance happened which is singularly like the appeal made to Him on His return into Galilee the year before by the nobleman, whose son He healed at a distance. It is hardly possible to suppose that the centurion, in whose favour the application for help was now made, did not know of the circumstances under which the child of his neighbour had been cured.<sup>4</sup> He was one of those devout heathen whom we come across in the New Testament history, who had been led to a knowledge of the true God by a sojourn in Palestine or by familiar intercourse with the Jews elsewhere. He had built the synagogue in which so many of our Lord's miracles and discourses must have been wrought and delivered. He first applied by means of the elders of the Jews, and afterwards himself met our Lord. The beautiful characteristic of the miracle is the faith of the centurion, who told our Lord that he was not worthy that He should enter under his roof, but that He had only to speak the word, and the servant for whom he pleaded would be healed. He knew what it was to obey and he knew what it was to command, and he was ready to believe without seeing, and was convinced that the powers of nature would obey a mere word of our Lord as his own servants obeyed him. It was in his case that our Lord declared that He had not found faith so great in Israel, and delivered His first prophecy, as it seems, as to the many who would come from the east and from the west, and sit down with the patriarchs in the kingdom.

<sup>4</sup> § 50. St. Matt. viii. 5—13; St. Luke vii. 1—10.

We next find our Lord on the way to Naim, a town in the centre of Galilee at some distance from Capharnaum.<sup>5</sup> As our Lord was approaching the gate in the evening, the usual time for funerals among the Jews, He met the crowd of mourners carrying out to burial the only son of a widow. He was at once moved to compassion, stopped the bier, bade the young man arise, and gave him to his mother. This, as far as we are told, was the first miracle of the kind which our Lord had wrought, and its effect on the mind of the people was in proportion to its magnitude. Fear came on all, and they magnified God, saying, A great prophet hath risen up amongst us, and God hath visited his people.

It would almost seem as if St. John Baptist had been waiting in his prison for the moment when our Lord should have manifested His authority over life and death, to take his last opportunity of bearing witness to Him. He had long been silenced from preaching, and had no power to baptize, but he still had a loving throng of disciples, who hung upon his words, lived by the rule of life which he gave them, and had not as yet left him in order to follow our Lord. We have already seen the method which St. John adopted in such cases, waiting for the working of grace in the hearts of his disciples rather than urging them on importunately himself. One of the characteristics of his mission, as compared with that of other great prophets who had gone before him, was that he had never worked a miracle, as if that particular evidence was at the time to be reserved for our Lord and for His own immediate followers. Now that the whole country was ringing with our Lord's miracles, and especially with the new power which He had displayed over death itself, St. John discerned in the wonders of which he heard 'the works of Christ,' the

<sup>5</sup> § 51. St. Luke vii. 11—16.



miraculous signs which had been foretold in marking out the Messias.<sup>6</sup> He sent, then, a deputation of his disciples to ask Him the formal question—a question to which our Lord seems so often to have evaded the giving a direct answer to His enemies—art ‘Thou He that is to come, or do we look for another?’ Our Lord, as St. Luke tells us, healed a great number of sick persons before the eyes of the messengers, and then sent them back, bidding them tell St. John what they had heard and seen, and quoting as a description of His miracles the words of Isaias which so clearly describe the signs of the Messias.

Our Lord took occasion from their departure to speak to the multitude of His own followers concerning St. John.<sup>7</sup> He was more than a prophet, because it was his peculiar office to go before the face and prepare the way for Him of Whom the prophets only spoke. And yet, high as was his office, so great was the dignity of the new kingdom and dispensation to which he did not directly belong, that the least minister in that kingdom was greater than he. His appearance had been the signal for the beginning of a new effusion of grace, which had become so powerful an influence on the hearts of many that they had, as it might be said, stormed and taken by force the kingdom of heaven. Indeed, he was the promised Elias, who was to come before the face of the Incarnate Son. It was at the same time that our Lord made His comparison between the men of the generation which had found something to say first against St. John and then against Himself, and the children in the market-place, who could be pleased neither by singing nor mourning. To this time also belong His denunciations of woe against the cities in

<sup>6</sup> § 52. St. Matt. xi. 2—6; St. Luke vii. 17—23.

<sup>7</sup> § 53. St. Matt. xi. 7—19; St. Luke vii. 24—35.



which His mighty works had been done, and His thanksgiving to His Father for having revealed the secrets of His kingdom to little ones.<sup>8</sup>

One more special triumph of grace must be spoken of as belonging to this period, before we proceed to mention the darker features by which it is marked.<sup>9</sup> Our Lord was at the table of a friendly Pharisee, in some town which is not named, and which may have been Capharnaum itself,<sup>10</sup> when the blessed penitent Magdalene came to His feet, the first of a long line of souls who were to be forgiven many sins because they loved much, anointed His feet with ointment, washed them with her tears, and then wiped them with the hairs of her head. She did not come for any boon of healing, for any external favour for herself or others, but simply to weep at her Saviour's feet for her sins, and implore His forgiveness. The Pharisee was scandalized, and thought our Lord could not know what sort of person she was whom He allowed to touch Him, and thus drew from our Lord the comparison between the love which he had himself shown his guest and that which the woman had shown. Now again our Lord exercised His authority to forgive sins, cancelling by His absolution not only the guilt, but all the pain which she had incurred. We find the name

<sup>8</sup> § 54. St. Matt. xi. 20—30.

<sup>9</sup> § 55. St. Luke vii. 36—50.

<sup>10</sup> St. Luke speaks of the woman as 'a sinner in the city.' The last place he has named is Naim, and from that circumstance some contemplative writers have connected the conversion of Magdalene with the miracle of the raising of the widow's son, and some have even supposed that the young man raised from the dead was well known to her. But it must be remembered that St. Luke places the whole story of the mission of St. John's disciples between the miracle and the unction of our Lord by Magdalene. It is possible that all these things may have taken place at Naim, but the words of St. Luke do not prove it, and are quite compatible with the other supposition that Capharnaum is the place.

of Magdalene left out in the narrative, and the omission appears to be due to the reverent charity of St. Luke. Her name is mentioned almost immediately afterwards by the same Evangelist, among those of the devout women already spoken of as attending on our Lord and on the Apostles in their missionary circuit at this time.

The account of this stage of our Lord's Preaching is completed by St. Matthew and St. Mark with some incidents which show the height to which the malice of His enemies had grown during the months of which we are speaking. We last heard of them as plotting against His life. We now find them guilty of the grossest calumny, and not shrinking from the imputation that He was in league with Satan, an imputation which involved the terrible sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Our Lord had delivered a demoniac, who was also afflicted with blindness and dumbness.<sup>11</sup> The dispossession was followed by the restoration of sight and speech. The people in their wonder and delight asked whether this were not the Son of David. But the Pharisees were not afraid to attribute the result to the power of Beelzebub. Our Lord, in His answer, first reasoned gently with them. How could Satan be divided against himself? How could he help in the destruction of his own kingdom? Moreover, there were other instances in which devils were cast out. Were these also brought about by a league with Satan? What they saw before their eyes was the despoiling of Satan of the power and possession which he had long held. This could not be done except by the might of One greater than himself Who had conquered him. Then He went on to warn them that this extreme insult to God, whereby the evident work of His Holy Spirit

<sup>11</sup> § 56. St. Matt. xii. 22—37; St. Mark iii. 22—30.

was attributed to His enemy, was a sin that could not be left unpunished in this world and in the next.

Another great provocation followed. He had worked hundreds of miracles, every one of which was an evidence of Divine power as well as a great work of mercy, and yet our Lord's enemies pressed Him to show them a sign, meaning, as it seems, some prodigy of power which should be a mere prodigy, such as had been seen in the case of Moses when he had been sent by God to the Israelites.<sup>12</sup> Our Lord always refused to work such signs at the bidding of His enemies, just as He would not satisfy the pride of the Nazarenes, nor afterwards work a miracle for the curiosity of Herod and his Court. But He said they were to have a sign, the sign of Jonas the prophet, the same sign to which he had alluded in covert language at Jerusalem, when they demanded His authority for the cleansing of the Temple. Then He had said that they might destroy the Temple and He would build it up in three days, and now He promises the Resurrection of the Son of Man after three days and three nights, according to the type of Jonas. He added that the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the South would rise up in judgment against and condemn the men of that generation, and He compared their case to that of the man out of whom the evil spirit had been cast, only to return again with seven other spirits more wicked than himself.

The Evangelical accounts relating to this missionary circuit and its incidents are closed by an anecdote which brings out most touchingly the close union between our Lord and His disciples, in contrast to the hardness of heart of the Jews in general, and to His severe language concerning them. The anecdote is that of our Blessed Lady and our Lord's brethren wishing

<sup>12</sup> § 57. St. Matt. xii. 38—45.

to speak with Him while He was teaching the multitude. Our Lord had thus the opportunity of protesting that those who hear the word of God and keep it are His mother and His brethren.<sup>13</sup>

The words in which our Lord spoke of the blessing of faithful hearers seem almost placed where they are in the Gospel history as if to prepare us for the teaching of the first of the great series of parables which were delivered at this time. The scene of the teaching by parables, of which this was the beginning, must certainly have been close to Capharnaum, and its occasion seems to have been our Lord's recent arrival at that place, after He had finished the missionary circuit, which was begun soon after the election of the twelve Apostles. As Capharnaum was known as our Lord's own city, the place at which He was to be found when not away from His home, while at other times he was travelling from spot to spot, according to no rule which could be known to others, it is clear that Capharnaum must have been the place at which His enemies would be on the watch for Him, especially if they had been sent or commissioned by the authorities at Jerusalem to endeavour to ensnare Him, or to paralyze His influence. This would be a reason why our Lord would be henceforth reserved and cautious in His teaching at Capharnaum, or rather, perhaps, why He would seldom be found there for any considerable space of time at once. It is clear from His language, when in answer to the inquiry of His Apostles He assigned a reason for the adoption of this new method of teaching the people exclusively by parables, that the hardness and dulness of their hearts made them unfit to receive the treasures of heavenly doctrine concerning His Father, which He now began to wrap up in this particular form. He

<sup>13</sup> § 57. St. Matt. xii. 46—50; St. Mark iii. 31—35; St. Luke viii. 19—21.



seems at this time, indeed, to have been most anxious to set forth the necessity of carefulness and devout attention in those to whom His words were addressed, as if even the eagerness with which the people thronged after Him from all parts was far from enough to secure them against the dangers which threatened unworthy listeners.

A great deal has been written concerning the general scope of the parables, as well as the particular signification of each single parable. Such questions must be left for the proper place in this work. It is enough to remind ourselves that our Lord's great design seems to have been to teach His intelligent hearers more and more concerning the character of His Father, His ways of dealing with men and His government of the world, while other truths concerning our duties to Him and our behaviour in presence of His gifts are blended with those which form the more immediate subject of the discourse. The first great cluster of the parables, comprising those which were now delivered from a boat to the people on the sea-shore near Capernaum, contains both these heads of teaching. The parable of the Sower<sup>14</sup> going forth to sow his seed represents God, or our Lord Himself, scattering the seed of the word with the utmost profusion, while we have the various classes of hearers represented in the ground, good or stony, by the wayside, shallow, or overgrown by thorns, on which the seed fell. The next parable, that of the wheat and the cockle, represents another law in the kingdom of God.<sup>15</sup> In this we have not only the good seed that is wasted, but the bad seed which is actually sown, and which springs up by the side of the good seed which is not wasted. The tolerance with which God bears with evil is explained in the

<sup>14</sup> § 58. St. Matt. xiii. 1—9; St. Mark iv. 1—9; St. Luke viii. 4—8.

<sup>15</sup> § 59. St. Matt. xiii. 24—30.



simple words, 'Suffer both to grow until the harvest,' and, inasmuch as in the spiritual order there can take place a change which has no counterpart in the physical order, that is, the cockle may become wheat or the wheat degenerate into cockle, there is a great significance in the reason given, 'Lest perhaps gathering up the cockle ye root up the wheat also together with it.'

The six parables—those of the seed which grows secretly, of the grain of mustard seed, of the leaven, of the hidden treasure, the precious pearl, and the draw-net, which follow on those two which have been already mentioned, may be considered as completing, each by the addition of some special feature, the picture here drawn by our Lord of His general dealings in His kingdom.<sup>16</sup> God addresses Himself to His creatures, and allows them to refuse or accept Him, He tolerates His enemies till the harvest, for their own sake and for the sake of those among whom they live. The parable (given by St. Mark alone) of the seed that grows gradually, seems to picture that progress from one virtue to another which is the course of those who belong to God, and which accounts for the abundant thirty-fold, sixty-fold, or a hundred-fold, of which mention has been made before. The image of the grain of mustard seed seems to represent the outward development and magnificent growth of the work of God in the world, while that of the leaven explains the law of its growth, which is from within, by the silent spread of the influence of grace, and the assimilation of those natural elements in the mass on which it works which are congenial to it. The parables of the treasure hidden in a field<sup>17</sup> and of the precious pearl may be understood either of the influence of grace on the hearts of those who understand

<sup>16</sup> § 60. St. Matt. xiii. 31—35; St. Mark iv. 26—34.

<sup>17</sup> § 62. St. Matt. xiii. 47—50.

and appreciate the value of God's favours and gifts, or directly of the love of God in seeking out our human nature, or the human soul, or the Church, and all that He has done in the Incarnation to make the treasure or the pearl His own. The last parable, of the draw-net, represents the Church as gathered together by God in order that He may choose the good and reject the bad, thus balancing and explaining the doctrine contained in the former parables of the Sower and the cockle.

Any careful reflection on the great truths which are thus set forth in these parables will enable us to see, in part at least, why our Lord did not directly and openly proclaim them. He explained some of them at great length<sup>18</sup> and with much minuteness to the Apostles, in a manner which suggests to us that every detail in these beautiful pictures is meant to have its counterpart in the truths which they represent, and He spoke as if He was satisfied with the intelligence which they had acquired concerning them. Immediately after the teaching was over, our Lord seems to have retired to the house which was His usual abode, and there to have explained the parables to His disciples. The next day the multitude was again there to hear Him teach, and, as it seems, in order to escape the publicity which was now dangerous to Him at Capharnaum, He ordered the Apostles to sail across the lake in the late evening.<sup>19</sup> The night was stormy, and while our Lord was asleep, His body wearied with the fatigue of His teaching during the day, a great tempest arose, on which the disciples woke Him, and He rebuked the winds and waves. In the morning they landed at a spot not exactly opposite Capharnaum

<sup>18</sup> § 61. St. Matt. xiii. 18—23; St. Mark iv. 10—15; St. Luke viii. 9—18. § 62. St. Matt. xiii. 36—46.

<sup>19</sup> § 63. St. Matt. viii. 18—27; St. Mark iv. 35—40; St. Luke viii. 22—25.

but lower down on the eastern shore, in the country of the Gerasenes. Here it was that our Lord was met by the two demoniacs, one of whom was possessed by a legion of devils, who are described in such terrible words by the Evangelists. Our Lord permitted the devils to enter into the herd of swine which was feeding on a hillside over the lake at a short distance from Him, and the whole herd immediately ran down over the cliff into the sea. The incident struck terror into the inhabitants, and, in a very different spirit from that in which St. Peter had made his request after the miraculous draught of fishes, they besought our Lord to depart out of their coasts.<sup>20</sup>

Thus it was that, on the day after He had left Capharnaum to escape the pressure of the multitude, our Lord returned thither. The people were expecting Him, and on His landing He was met by some disciples of St. John, who repeated in somewhat different words the question as to His rule of fasting which had before been put to Him at the banquet given by St. Matthew.<sup>21</sup> His answer was in the same proverbial form as before, speaking about the children of the bridechamber, and of the new wine which was not to be put into old bottles. But there was another more urgent call awaiting His charity. Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, had a daughter on the point of death, and he came to beg our Lord to come and lay His hands on her, in full faith that she would then recover.<sup>22</sup> Our Lord arose at once, and went towards the house with His Apostles, in the midst of a great concourse of people. A woman who had been suffering many years from an issue of blood,

<sup>20</sup> § 64. St. Matt. viii. 28—34; St. Mark v. 1—21; St. Luke viii. 26—40.

<sup>21</sup> § 65. St. Matt. ix. 14—17.

<sup>22</sup> § 66. St. Matt. ix. 18—26; St. Mark v. 22—43; St. Luke viii. 42—56.

and had gained no benefit from spending all her substance upon doctors, came near and touched the hem of His garment, in humble faith that that would be enough to heal her. Her faith was rewarded by an instantaneous cure, but our Lord would not let her shrink away in the crowd as she had come, but stopped, asked who had touched Him, and made her confess what had taken place. The miracle which was wrought in reward for her faith was published in order to confirm the faith of Jairus, who received the message of his daughter's death just at the time when our Lord spoke to the woman in the crowd. Our Lord bade him fear nothing—only to have faith. When they came to the house, He found the mourning already begun, and He was laughed at when He said that the damsel was only asleep. She was only asleep, because all sleep has a wakening, but from death there is no wakening, and she was to awake. Our Lord would let no one remain in the room with her but the father and mother, and the three chief Apostles, Peter, James, and John. Then He took her by the hand and bade her rise. She rose up at once, but our Lord, after bidding them give her something to eat, laid on them the strictest injunctions to tell no one what had happened. This great miracle, therefore, is wonderfully contrasted with the one previously recorded miracle of the same kind, that of the raising of the widow's son. That was wrought unsolicited, with no requirement of faith except in the obedience of the bearers of the bier, who stood still at our Lord's command, and it was also wrought in public. In the case of Jairus, the miracle is a far higher one than he had ventured to ask, his faith is most carefully led on and supported, and the greatest secrecy is observed by our Lord at the time and enjoined afterwards, although, as was so often the case, the injunction was not obeyed.



But the series of miracles was not yet ended by which this day was to be marked, a day on which our Lord had designed, if we may so say, to be apart from all notice on the further side of the lake, where His enemies could not reach Him with their plots or their calumnies. Two blind men followed him, calling on Him as the Son of David to heal them. He passed into the house where He usually abode, and they followed Him. He asked them if they believed He could heal them, and on their answering yes, He said, 'According to your faith be it done unto you,' and they were at once restored to sight. As soon as they were gone out a poor demoniac was brought to Him, who was also dumb. He cast out the devil, and the dumb man spoke. When it was known, and the crowd were glorifying God, the Pharisees once more repeated their deadly calumny about His league with Beelzebub. 'He casteth out devils in the prince of the devils.'<sup>23</sup>

The whole of this series of actions and miracles of our Lord, which fill up a space of perhaps not more than two days, are related by the Evangelists as if they had been drawn out, so to speak, from our Blessed Lord almost against His plan of conduct at this time, by the overruling Providence of His Father. His great desire seems to have been to escape notice at Capharnaum. We find Him immediately after setting off on another missionary circuit throughout Galilee, in the course of which He once more came to Nazareth, as if it were right to give the inhabitants of that once most blessed spot another opportunity of manifesting a humble faith in Him Whom they knew only as the Son of Joseph. He taught in the synagogue, but He was again received with the same pride and contempt as before. 'Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary, the brother of

<sup>23</sup> § 67. St. Matt. ix. 27—34.



James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters also with us?' He answered in His usual way, that a prophet was not without honour save in his own country. He healed a few sick persons—more He was unable to do for them on account of their unbelief.<sup>24</sup>

It has already been said that the parable of the Sower seems to fix the date of the incidents on which we have now been dwelling in the autumn, about the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. It has been thought by some that about the same time St. John Baptist was put to death by Herod at the request of Salome, the daughter of Herodias.<sup>25</sup> Salome had danced a lascivious dance in the presence of the King and a large number of guests, the chief officials of the tetrarchy, on the day on which his accession was celebrated, and Herod, in that foolish ambition of aping the manners of far more magnificent sovereigns of old, which was characteristic of the princes of his family, had promised to give her whatever she asked, even to the half of his kingdom. Her mother's hatred for St. John prompted the answer that she would have his head at once in a charger, and Herod had not the courage to refuse. The saint was beheaded in prison, and his head given to the dancing girl. His disciples at once buried his body in honour. The memory of the Saint haunted ever the sensual tyrant who had so lightly handed him over to death. A few months afterwards, as it appears, when the preaching of the Apostles, of which we are presently to speak, had spread still more widely the fame of our Lord, it reached the ears of Herod, and drew his attention to Him. St. John's murder is said to have taken place at the distant fortress of Machærus, but Herod seems soon afterwards to have left it for his palace at Tiberias, near the scene of our Lord's labours.

<sup>24</sup> § 68. St. Matt. xiii. 54—58; St. Mark vi. 1—6.

<sup>25</sup> § 71. St. Matt. xiv. 1—13; St. Mark vi. 12—29; St. Luke ix. 6—9.

Hitherto the Apostles, since their election, do not seem to have been separated from our Lord. The time was now come when they were to be sent out to preach themselves. We are told that this step was taken by our Lord out of a special movement of compassion for the multitudes who thronged to His teaching, who were as sheep that have no shepherd. He bade the Apostles pray to the Lord of the Harvest that He would send forth labourers into the abundant harvest which awaited them. He then sent them out, two and two, with power over all devils, and of healing diseases. Their two duties were to be the preaching of the kingdom of God and the cure of the sick. The charge which our Lord gave to the Apostles when He sent them forth is given by each of the three historical Evangelists,<sup>26</sup> but in St. Matthew it is expanded to much greater length than in the other two, and, as it stands in his Gospel, seems to look into the far future, when the Apostles were to be sent out after the day of Pentecost. Thus it contains rules for the conduct as well as topics for the consolation of their successors in the ministry in all the generations of the Church.<sup>27</sup>

The length of time during which the Apostles thus preached is not stated in the Gospels, but either in that or in subsequent missionary labours of the same kind in which our Lord took them with Him, several months of the year seem to have been spent. The movement throughout Galilee was greater than ever, and it reached the ears of the voluptuous and hardened tetrarch himself, who seems to have regarded it with a superstitious curiosity rather than with any other feeling, wondering whether St. John Baptist had risen from the dead to work all these miracles, and desiring to see our Lord,

<sup>26</sup> § 69. St. Matt. ix. 36—38, xi. 16; St. Mark vi. 7—11; St. Luke ix. 1—5.

<sup>27</sup> § 70. St. Matt. x. 16—42.

as worldlings desire to become acquainted with any one who can supply them with a new excitement or pander to their love of the marvellous.<sup>28</sup> But the curiosity of such a suspicious and sensual despot could not be excited without danger to its object, and the report of Herod's newly awakened interest in our Lord was brought to Him by friends equally devoted to Him and to the memory of St. John.

It was apparently near the feast of the Pasch, in the early spring, when the Apostles came back from their mission and told our Lord how they had fared therein. Some months must therefore have elapsed since the beginning of the teaching by parables, and we are already accustomed to the thought that the times when we hear of few extraordinary incidents in our Lord's Life are the times when He was most busily employed in His ordinary missionary labours. The Apostles were wearied with their exertions, and our Lord took them away with Him for a short interval of rest to a desert spot near Bethsaida. Here again He wrought one of His greatest and most significant miracles on an occasion which seemed to come unexpectedly.<sup>29</sup> Multitudes followed Him and the Apostles into the desert, and thus it came about that, as the evening drew on, He found Himself with more than five thousand persons at a distance from any place where they could obtain refreshment, after the long day which they had spent in following and listening to Him. This led to the great miracle of the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, the whole of the little resources of the Apostolic company. Our Lord on this occasion distributed the loaves and fishes to the Apostles, in whose hands, as it appears, they were

<sup>28</sup> § 71. St. Matt. xi. 1; St. Mark vi. 21—16; St. Luke ix. 6—9.

<sup>29</sup> § 72. St. Matt. xiv. 13—21; St. Mark vi. 30—44; St. Luke ix. 10—17; St. John vi. 1—13.

multiplied, and who gave them to the multitude. Every circumstance of this great miracle, which ranks, in respect of doctrine and spiritual significance, in the very highest order of such works of our Lord, like the miracle at Cana or that by which the power to forgive sins was proved, has been dwelt upon with studious love by Christian writers. But on that very account we must content ourselves in this part of our work with the simplest narrative of the circumstances.

The state of mind of the people in general at this time is evidenced by many incidental notices in the Evangelical narrative. It is clear that our Lord's frequent and prolonged absences from Capharnaum and its neighbourhood made the people of those parts extremely eager to catch at any occasion of hearing Him, and, still more, of obtaining from His inexhaustible mercifulness the cure of bodily ailments for themselves or their friends and relatives. Thus, whenever He appears, He is immediately pursued, and they follow Him into the desert without taking any thought for making provision of food. Women and children run after Him as well as the men. The Galilæans seem to have been at times a turbulent excitable race, and this miracle of the feeding of thousands on a few loaves and fishes, resembling so much what had been done for the whole people of Israel in the desert during the time of their long wanderings, roused their enthusiasm to the highest pitch, and they conceived the plan of forcing Him to put Himself at the head of an insurrection, and so making Him King. The idea sprung up among the multitude as they were on their way homewards after the miraculous feeding.<sup>30</sup> Our Lord knew it, and sent His disciples across the lake in the ship in which He was known to have sailed to the spot of the feeding, remaining himself on a lonely

<sup>30</sup> § 73. St. Matt. xiv. 22—36; St. Mark vi. 45—56; St. John vi. 14—21.



mountain to spend the greater part of the night in prayer. The miracle which He had wrought had been intended to serve far higher purposes than those of that merciful instinct of the Sacred Humanity which had led Him to supply the hungry multitude with food for the body. It was the foreshadowing and preparation for the great, surpassing, and enduring miracle of His love, in making His own Body and Blood the food of the souls of men in all the successive generations of the Church and on every Catholic altar. This, then, was one of the occasions on which His long prayer is recorded. The disciples set off alone, against a stormy wind and high sea, and made but little progress towards the further shore, when 'about the fourth watch of the night,' not very long before the dawn, they saw our Lord walking in the same direction on the waters. In their alarm they cried out, but He bade them fear nothing, it was He. St. Peter prayed that He would bid him come to Him on the waters. Our Lord told him to come, and for a time he too walked, but his faith began to fail at the sight of the waves and winds, and he called on our Lord to save him from sinking. When our Lord entered the boat the storm at once ceased, and the vessel was at the shore.

The people, not finding our Lord at the place where He had been last seen, followed Him to Capharnaum in boats.<sup>31</sup> St. John gives the heads or substance of a long discourse on the miracle held by our Lord in the synagogue at Capharnaum, in which, after insisting on the necessity of faith in Himself, He went on so clearly and forcibly to lay down the doctrine of His own presence in the Blessed Sacrament and of the necessity for salvation of Holy Communion, in which His Flesh is eaten and His Blood is drunk, that not only were the

<sup>31</sup> St. John vi. 22—24.



Jews scandalized at His language, but many of His own followers left Him in consequence.<sup>32</sup> It may well be that their hearts had long been growing cold, and that they felt the influence of the determined opposition made to Him by the ecclesiastical authorities, an opposition which had already deepened into persecution which threatened not Him alone, but all His followers also. In such cases the strong call made on their faith by the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament, may have been seized on as an occasion on which a disaffection was manifested which had long existed. But it is clear that the direct cause of the defection of many was the doctrine itself, which our Lord nevertheless put forward with the fullest precision and urged with the utmost force as of necessity to salvation. Here was another instance of our Lord's unfolding a great doctrine concerning His own Person and the great principles of the Kingdom of the Incarnation, in which He did not hold back claims of authority of the highest order, notwithstanding the certain reluctance of many of His hearers to admit them.

It was now that our Lord put to the Apostles the question which seems like a preparation for that further question which He was soon to ask them as to their faith in Himself—'Will you also go away?' St. Peter answered now as then, in the name of them all, that they could go to no one else, that He had the words of eternal life, and that they believed and had learnt that He was the Christ the Son of God. Our Lord's answer contained the mournful presage of His betrayal by one of their number—'Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil!'

His presence at Capharnaum on this occasion was not to pass without a further formal attack from His declared

<sup>32</sup> § 74. St. John vi. 25—72.

enemies. Some Pharisees and scribes, sent down from Jerusalem, came to Him with a new charge against His disciples, involving a reflection on their Master.<sup>33</sup> The disciples went to table without washing their hands, and this was a violation of the 'traditions of the elders.' Our Lord replied in a tone quite as severe as any that He had ever used to them, applying to them the words of the prophet as to people who honoured God with their lips, while their hearts were far from Him, and reproaching them for the manner in which they made the Commandments themselves void through their traditions. He then called the crowd to him, and told them plainly and urgently that it was not that which went into a man's mouth which defiled him, but that which proceeded forth from him. He would not listen to the remonstrance of the disciples about scandalizing the Pharisees, and when they were alone in the house, He blamed them for not understanding that it was from the heart of man that all kinds of wickedness came forth.

This attack from His enemies seems again to have driven our Lord from Capharnaum. It was now after the feast of the Pasch, the third in the course of His Ministry. He had not gone up to it Himself, nor, as it seems, had He sent His Apostles. We find Him next on the very confines of the Holy Land, on the borders of Tyre and Sidon, where the Gentile woman, who besought Him to cure her daughter, was at first rejected by Him as not belonging to the house of Israel, for whom He was sent, but afterwards won from Him the full granting of her desire by her reply, that the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the children's table.<sup>34</sup> From Tyre and Sidon He passed homewards again,

<sup>33</sup> § 75. St. Matt. xv. 1—20; St. Mark vii. 1—23.

<sup>34</sup> § 76. St. Matt. xv. 21—28; St. Mark vii. 24—30.

through the territory of the cluster of towns called Decapolis, and here He healed, with circumstances of apparent comparative difficulty, a deaf and dumb man, taking him apart from the crowd, putting His fingers into his ears, touching his tongue, and sighing as He said Ephphetha.<sup>35</sup> After this He is again found on the familiar shores of the sea of Galilee, and although He goes up into a mountain, the news of His presence is spread abroad over the whole country, and multitudes throng to Him, as was always the case after an absence, bringing to Him great numbers of dumb, deaf, blind, and lame persons, all of whom were healed. For the benefit of this multitude, who had remained with Him three days, and had nothing to eat, our Lord now repeated the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, feeding with seven loaves and a few fishes as many as four thousand men, besides women and children. He then sent them away, and sailed to another point on the lake.<sup>36</sup>

Here again, as before, his adversaries were waiting for Him with an insidious demand for a sign from heaven. He answered them as He had answered others before, and left the place. On the voyage across, or as it seems probable, up the lake to its northern extremity, He warned the disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and of Herod, and they took His words literally, as if He had meant indirectly to reproach them with having taken no bread with them. At Bethsaida—a second town of the same name with that of which we hear so much in the course of the Gospel history—near which he landed, a blind man was brought to Him, whom He healed with the same apparent effort which has been noticed in the last miracle on the deaf and

<sup>35</sup> § 77. St. Mark vii. 31—37.

<sup>36</sup> § 78. St. Matt. xv. 29—39; St. Mark viii. 1—10.

dumb man in Decapolis, having first taken him out of the town, and then charging him after his cure to tell no man of it.<sup>37</sup>

His course lay still further north, into the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi. Here He was withdrawn alike from the importunate, readily believing crowd, who yet saw in Him rather the 'thaumaturge,' the worker of miracles of mercy, the deliverer from disease and the tyranny of the devils, than the Divine Saviour of the world, Who had come to heal the spiritual maladies of their souls. Here too He was free from the continual vexations and captious questions and the more malignant calumnies of His enemies. But He had to purchase this comparative immunity and retirement at the price of the abandonment of what had hitherto been the chief scenes of His labours. Still the Twelve were with Him. He had carefully formed them and led them on from one truth to another, and His various manifestations of power and authority, as well as His declarations as to doctrine, had been addressed to them far more than to the multitude, from the time that He had chosen them to their high office in His Church. It was now time to put their faith to its formal test, and then to lead them on to still further and more sublime truths concerning Himself, which nothing would enable them to bear except a firm faith in His Divinity.

The circumstances of the great Confession of St. Peter are related shortly by all the three historical Evangelists.<sup>38</sup> They are very similar to those of the former question and confession, so to call it, which had followed on the abandonment of our Lord by many of His disciples after the discourse on the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament in the synagogue at Capharnaum. Our Lord

<sup>37</sup> § 80. St. Mark viii. 22—26.

<sup>38</sup> § 81. St. Matt. xvi. 13—20; St. Mark viii. 27—30; St. Luke ix. 18—21.



began by asking the Apostles generally; Who do men say that I the Son of Man am? They told Him John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 'But who do you say that I am?' This time it was Peter alone who answered. 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Our Lord immediately rewarded him in language which corresponds exactly to his own confession. 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father Who is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

This confession of St. Peter, and the magnificent blessing which it drew from our Lord, may be said to be the very central point of our Lord's Ministry. All before it leads up to it, and all that follows it in some sense takes its colour from it. It is to the creation of the Church what the Annunciation is to the Incarnation. St. Peter's faith is tested by the question of our Lord, as Mary's faith was tested by the message of the Angel. As her consent was the proximate cause of her becoming the Mother of God, so was his faith the condition of the foundation of the Church upon Him. The great things which God did for her were all summed up in the announcement of Gabriel, and the incommunicable privileges of Peter are all contained in the blessing and the promise now uttered so solemnly by our Lord. It is true that much was yet to be done before the Church was to be founded and the keys of heaven conferred, but our Lord's words now spoken to His Apostles manifest Him as the Creator of the new kingdom and



the Author of all the innumerable blessings and glories involved in the earthly and heavenly existence of the Church which He was to purchase with His Blood.

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## CHAPTER X.

### *The Second Stage of the Public Life in the Four Gospels.*

THE period of our Lord's Public Ministry which has been summarized in the last chapter will be found, like that which preceded it, to have its chief points and divisions sufficiently marked in the three historical Gospels. The salient points of which we speak may be said to be, first, the choice of the Twelve Apostles, then the beginning of the teaching by parables, thirdly, the mission of the Apostles two and two to preach and heal diseases, fourthly, the great and sacramental miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, and lastly, the Confession of St. Peter. We find also intimations, more or less certain, of the time of year at which some of these points are to be fixed. Thus we may consider that the choice of the Twelve was made at or about the Feast of Pentecost. The parable of the Sower may have been delivered in the autumn, about the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the death of St. John Baptist is thought to have taken place about the same time, though there are not wanting arguments for placing it several months later. The first miracle of the multiplication of the loaves is fixed, by the remark of St. John, at the Pasch—the third in our Lord's Ministry, and the last before His Passion. The interval between

this miracle and the Confession of St. Peter does not appear to have been very great.

The accuracy of any view of the four Evangelists, as considered each respectively in his manner of dealing with the events of our Lord's Life, may very fairly be tested by its consistency. It is useful for the purpose of our present work to divide the Ministry of our Lord into successive periods, but it must be remembered that these are in truth absolutely continuous. We must expect to find the same methods and principles characterizing the several Evangelists in each of the successive portions into which the Ministry is divided, and if this were not so it would raise some suspicion against the accuracy of the interpretation which is applied to the whole subject. The individuality of each Evangelist is marked in the strongest manner on his work, and must not be lost sight of when they are put side by side for the purpose of weaving their narratives into one harmonious whole. We shall find, unless we are mistaken, that this simple consideration will add much interest to the successive chapters in which the method of each Evangelist is traced as to this or that particular period. We begin, as before, with St. Mark.

The five great points of this period are mentioned in due succession and order by the Evangelist St. Mark, whose narrative we may again take as representing to us the Apostolical teaching concerning our Lord's Life in its simplest elements. St. Mark begins with the choice of the Apostles, and he passes on rapidly to the teaching in parables, mentioning only the calumny of the Pharisees about our Lord's league with Beelzebub, and the anecdote of His saying that the disciples who did the will of His Father were His Mother and His brethren. Thus St. Mark entirely omits the Sermon on the Plain, for the reason for which he had already omitted

the Sermon on the Mount, his Gospel not containing any long discourses of our Lord. We can only guess why he passes over the miracle on the centurion's servant. The raising of the widow's son he may probably have left out, as St. Matthew has left it out, because neither loves repetitions, and this miracle is very similar to the raising of the daughter of Jairus. St. Mark also, like St. Matthew, says nothing about the anointing of our Lord's feet by St. Mary Magdalene on the occasion of what we may speak of as her conversion, probably for a reason similar to that just mentioned. Both these Evangelists relate in its proper place the second unction of our Lord at the Supper at Bethany, an anecdote of great importance in the history, inasmuch as it led immediately to the betrayal of our Lord by Judas. And we shall hereafter see that St. Luke, whose Gospel is so full of what is touching and compassionate, inserts this scene of the conversion of St. Mary Magdalene, leaving out the unction at the Supper at Bethany.

In his account of the parables, St. Mark follows St. Matthew, but he is considerably shorter, as if here again he was shrinking from discourses and preferring the actions of our Lord. He omits the parables of the cockle, the leaven, and the three last in this cluster—those of the treasure, the pearl, and the net. His history then proceeds in the order which has been followed above. He mentions our Lord's night voyage on the lake, the storm, the incident of the legion of the devils, our Lord's return, and then the miracles on the woman with an issue of blood and the daughter of Jairus, and then passes on to the visit to Nazareth and the mission of the Apostles, giving very shortly indeed the heads of the first part of our Lord's instruction to them.

As to the remainder of the incidents which belong to this period, St. Mark omits hardly any. He relates the

death of St. John the Baptist, the return of the Apostles to our Lord, His retirement into the desert, and the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. He mentions the night voyage of the Apostles, and our Lord's walking on the waters, though he omits what St. Matthew alone records, the attempt of St. Peter to walk on the waters to Him. He passes over, as do all the three first Evangelists, the long doctrinal discourse of our Lord in the synagogue at Capharnaum, but he follows St. Matthew in narrating the dispute with the Pharisees about traditions which took place at the same time. Then he passes to our Lord's wanderings in the regions of Tyre and Sidon, and the incident of the Syro-phœnician woman, to which he subjoins the miracle, mentioned by no other Evangelist, of the deaf and dumb man who was cured in Decapolis. The feeding of the four thousand follows, and then, omitting the miracle on the blind man at Bethsaida, which is so nearly parallel to his own miracle on the deaf and dumb just mentioned, St. Mark gives us, though with greater brevity than St. Matthew and St. Luke, the great Confession of St. Peter. His brevity seems evidently prompted by his own near relations with St. Peter, which may also have furnished the reason why he has left out that part of the miraculous walking on the water which refers to that Apostle.

In this narrative of St. Mark there is no omission of or departure from the historical order, unless it be in one unimportant particular of which notice will be taken hereafter. The omissions are all in entire keeping with the general character of his Gospel, and with the principle which the Evangelists have so seldom departed from, of not relating very similar actions in two different places. The only omissions for which there is not an obvious reason is that of the cure of the centurion's



servant, and of the mission of the disciples of St. John Baptist and our Lord's discourse in praise of that great Saint.

We thus find St. Mark now, as before, following very faithfully in the track of St. Matthew, but still with great independence. There are very few sections of his Gospel, as it lies before us in the Harmony as to this period, which he did not find already in the Gospel of St. Matthew. But, in the first place, he has put the whole history into chronological order. In the second place, he has added one or two by no means unimportant incidents. Thus, he has separated the choice of the Twelve Apostles from their mission to preach, whereas St. Matthew leaves out all account of them as the Twelve until he relates that mission. We have thus one important stage in their gradual formation added. Again, he has added the beautiful parable about the seed growing secretly and gradually—the main thought of which it is hardly fanciful to consider as one in which St. Peter seems to have delighted.<sup>1</sup> He has also added the miracle on the deaf and dumb man in Decapolis—a miracle in which every movement and action of our Lord is so lovingly and minutely portrayed. Here we seem to see the hand of St. Peter guiding that of the Evangelist. In the third place, we may observe how all through, when St. Mark has to relate the same things with St. Matthew, or with St. Matthew and St. Luke, he notes in the same minute way the little personal circumstances and incidents which make his account so much fuller and more like that of an eye-witness. This characteristic of St. Mark might be tested by any one who would be at the pains to compare his account, for instance, of the healing of St. Peter's mother-in-law, of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the passage in St. Peter's second Epistle which is almost a commentary on this parable (2 St. Peter i. 5—8).



the leper, or of the paralytic, in the former section of the Public Life, or again, of the storm at sea when our Lord was asleep, and of the incident of the legion of devils in the land of the Gerasenes, in this, with the parallel accounts in the other Evangelists. St. Matthew is always concise and abrupt, St. Luke historical, and St. Mark tenderly personal. But it must be enough here to have indicated these characteristics. In the last place, we see how St. Mark has omitted much that was less in its place in a Gospel of action and one written primarily for a community of Gentiles as well as of Jews, than elsewhere. Discourses, parables, disputations, instructions, appeals to fulfilments of prophecy, or such topics as the contrast between the faith of the Gentile centurion and that of the Jews, or the question of St. John Baptist to our Lord, are all either passed over by St. Mark or treated with great brevity. Thus he is at once shorter and fuller than St. Matthew—shorter, because he mentions fewer subjects, fuller, because he dwells far more on details.

The main outlines of this part of our Lord's Ministry are not less clearly indicated by St. Luke than by St. Mark. It is to St. Luke that we owe the account of the Sermon on the Plain, delivered immediately after the choice of the Apostles. He adds a few incidents, also, to the interval between the delivery of that sermon and the beginning of the teaching by parables—incidents which are strikingly in keeping with the general character of tenderness and compassionateness which distinguishes this Evangelist. These incidents are the raising of the widow's son at Naim, and the conversion and absolution of St. Mary Magdalene. In other respects St. Luke follows close in the track of St. Matthew, as to the coming of the disciples of St. John Baptist, our Lord's answer to them and discourse as to His Forerunner, and

the seeking of a sign on the part of His enemies. He omits, for a reason of his own—similar to that which made him omit the Sermon on the Mount—the anecdote of the cure which gave occasion to the calumnies of the Pharisees about Beelzebub. That is, he reserves a similar anecdote for another place. When he comes to the teaching by parables, St. Luke mentions the change of method of our Lord and the reason which He assigned for it; but of all the series which St. Matthew has given he only inserts one, the parable of the Sower. The subsequent passage across the lake, the scene in the country of the Gerasenes, the legion of devils and the herd of swine, our Lord's return to Capharnaum, and the great miracles there wrought on the woman with the issue of blood and the daughter of Jairus, are all in their proper place in St. Luke's narrative. The two last miracles of the chain which St. Matthew has formed are left out by St. Luke, as well as our Lord's visit at this time to Nazareth. It will be remembered that he is the only Evangelist who has mentioned our Lord's first visit to the home of His childhood at the beginning of His Preaching, and that he is therefore consistent with his own principles as an Evangelist in leaving this second visit unnoticed. The incidents which immediately follow in the general history, the mission of the Apostles, the death of St. John, the multiplication of the five loaves, are all here in their order. But St. Luke passes at once, by a quick transition, to the Confession of St. Peter, omitting all else which the other two Evangelists have related before it. We see here, therefore, the principle on which St. Luke has acted, and on which we shall find him acting in a still more marked manner in the next great division of the history. He gives the prominent points, which are really, so to speak, landmarks in the general narrative, as they have been given

by those who have preceded him. But as to other incidents he aims at supplementing the history as it lies in the pages of St. Matthew and St. Mark, rather than at repeating it, though he seems always to have in view the object of giving to his own readers a complete Gospel, that is, an account of our Lord's actions and teaching which leaves out no one of the great features of the whole. But we may have more to say of the special characteristics of St. Luke when we speak of the next period of the Public Life, in which we shall find him, with St. John, far fuller than St. Matthew or St. Mark.

The part of St. John in the building up of the history with which we have been concerned is very simple and easily stated. One great chapter of his gospel is occupied with what falls within this period. He marks the singular prominence of the miracle of the five loaves by selecting it, alone of all our Lord's miracles, for a place in his own Gospel after it had been already recounted by the three other Evangelists. But he relates it for the same purpose as the miracle on the impotent man wrought at the Pool of Bethesda. That is, he subjoins the long discourse of our Lord in the synagogue at Capharnaum, which discourse was occasioned by this miracle, and which embodies our Lord's great teaching concerning the Blessed Sacrament. We may notice also that St. John has incidentally supplemented his history as to other points by what he has added in reference to the miracle of the five thousand and the discourse in the synagogue at Capharnaum. For, though he mentions with great brevity our Lord's walking on the waters on the night after the miracle, he still adds a circumstance which no one else has inserted, that as soon as our Lord entered the boat in which the Apostles were, they were at once at land. And he has also added the

circumstance of the question put by our Lord to the Apostles, after the desertion of so many of His disciples, 'Will you also go away?' and in the answer of St. Peter to that question he has given us, as has been already remarked, a confession of faith on the part of that Apostle which is a singular anticipation of his great confession at Cæsarea Philippi. We also owe to St. John the knowledge that all this took place just at the time of the Pasch, and that our Lord, so long beforehand, virtually predicted to the Apostles the betrayal of Judas, though He had not as yet spoken to them of His own Passion, which that betrayal was to occasion.

We have now to return on our own footsteps, and having traced the part borne by each of the last three Evangelists in making up, so to say, the general narrative of this stage of our Lord's preaching, to give some account of the manner in which it has been dealt with by the first of the four. We have already said more than once, that St. Matthew's Gospel is not so much a history as a treatise founded on a history. All, therefore, that we can expect for the purpose which we have now in view is to find the main outlines and landmarks of this period of our Lord's Ministry clearly indicated in St. Matthew, in the order in which they occurred, except where he can be shown on other grounds to have purposely departed from that order. We have already explained that St. Matthew's Gospel, in that part of it with which we have as yet had to deal, is arranged according to the requirements of the following order. After the introductory mysteries, as they may be called, he gives first the great summary of doctrine contained in the Sermon on the Mount. In the second place, he confirms, so to say, this doctrine by a beautifully woven chain of miracles of every kind, selected from different parts of our Lord's Ministry, but all



Galilæan as to place, and all anterior to the time after which Galilee ceased to be the chief scene of our Lord's active labours, that is, the time of the Confession of St. Peter and the Transfiguration. His next object is to furnish the Christian teacher with what we may call our Lord's personal instructions to him, and with this object he proceeds at once, when the chain of miracles has been completed, to the mission of the Apostles and the long charge which our Lord delivered to them—a charge which, as has been remarked, is clearly meant for all times, and not only for the particular occasion on which they were sent to none but the lost sheep of the house of Israel. After this, St. Matthew mentions the mission of the disciples of St. John to our Lord, the witness borne by our Lord to St. John, the complaint about the personal treatment of both by the men of that generation, the woes denounced on Corozain, Bethsaida, and Capharnaum, and the rejoicing of our Lord over the little ones to whom God had revealed the secrets of His kingdom. Through all this chapter there runs a keynote, as it were—our Lord is pointing out the treatment which He and St. John have received in their preaching. This may be called the passive opposition to the Gospel message. The next chapter relates the three several stages of the active opposition to the same—the persecution under pretext of zeal for the Sabbath, the charge about a league with Beelzebub, and the demand for a sign from heaven. Then, after mentioning the incident of our Blessed Lady and our Lord's brethren seeking to speak with Him—the most significant part of which is what our Lord said about His disciples—St. Matthew passes at once to the teaching by parables.

It is here, then, that he takes up again, what he seems afterwards never to abandon altogether, the chronological



order. Up to this point, from the Sermon on the Mount, he has been following the order of ideas. This has led him, in some instances, which have already been specified, either directly or indirectly, to invert the order of time. As has been already said, he has taken a cluster of miracles from the period immediately following the teaching by parables and joined them to others which happened in the previous year. These miracles are the casting out of the legion of devils, the stilling the tempest, the cure of the issue of blood, the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and the two other miracles which immediately followed. And he has also related in the same place the question of the disciples of John, which is immediately connected with the miracle on the daughter of Jairus. All these incidents, therefore, are missed from their proper place in St. Matthew's account of the period now before us. He has also passed over the choice of the Apostles, which was made early in this second year of the Ministry, and has placed their mission immediately after his series of miracles, and so before a great number of incidents which in truth preceded it in point of time. These anticipations of St. Matthew leave large gaps in his story after the teaching by parables had begun, for that is the proper place, as we learn from the other Evangelists, whose order he nowhere contradicts, for the incidents of which he has anticipated the time.

When this is considered, the order of St. Matthew, in relation to the events of the central year of the Ministry, becomes easily intelligible. The choice of the Apostles, as we have seen, he passes over, because when he introduces them they have already been chosen for some months. The Sermon on the Plain he omits, because he has already given the Sermon on the Mount. He relates the miracle on the centurion's servant, but

in his own order as a part of his chain of miracles. He omits the raising of the widow's son, for that was less fit for a place in his chain than the raising of the daughter of Jairus, which is not an isolated miracle, but one connected with three others which he also relates. Of all the other incidents which intervened between this miracle and the teaching by parables, he omits none except the unction of our Lord by St. Mary Magdalene, because he supplies this by mentioning the second unction by the same at the Supper at Bethany. In the chain of parables St. Matthew is, so to speak, at home, for, as has been said, he is the Evangelist of Christian teaching, and while in his narrative he is succinct, and seems to content himself with the shortest possible statement of the chief points in an incident, in his account of our Lord's words he is comparatively full. The stilling the tempest, the miracle of the legion of devils, and the rest, we have already said that he mentions out of their historical order. He puts in its proper place and connection the visit of our Lord to Nazareth. After this he is again silent, because the mission of the Apostles, which follows next, has also been anticipated by him. But all that took place from the time when the fame of our Lord reached the ears of Herod, on occasion of which it is that the Evangelists mention the circumstances of the death of St. John, to the Confession of St. Peter—that is, the miracle of the loaves and its consequences, the disputation about traditions, the miracle won by the Syrophenician woman, the feeding of the four thousand, the warning against the leaven of the Pharisees, and the cure of the blind man at Bethsaida,—all this series of incidents are in the proper place in St. Matthew's Gospel. He alone has told us of St. Peter's attempt to walk on the waters, and of the last mentioned miracle at Bethsaida. His

only omissions are that of the long discourse about the Blessed Sacrament in the synagogue of Capharnaum after the miracle of the five thousand—a discourse, the doctrinal character of which is not in keeping with the general and practical tone of his Gospel,—and that of the miracle on the deaf and dumb man in Decapolis—a miracle entirely agreeing in its peculiar features with that on the blind man at Bethsaida which he relates, and which took place almost at the same time.

We need hardly pause here to add any lengthened examination of the manner in which St. Matthew is all through this, as well as the other parts of his Gospel, continually drawing attention to the fulfilment of the prophecies in our Lord. He seems always on the watch for such fulfilments, and appears to suggest them even where he has not distinctly pointed them out by quotations. To these and other similar characteristics of St. Matthew and the other Evangelists it would be beyond our purpose in this place to do more than refer.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *Harmony of the Gospels as to the Second Period of the Public Life.*

FROM THE ELECTION OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES TO THE CONFESSION OF ST. PETER.

#### § 46.—*Choice of the Twelve Apostles.*

St. Mark iii. 13—19.

St. Luke vi. 12—16.

And going up into a mountain, He called unto Him whom He would Himself, and they came to Him. And He made that twelve should be with Him, and that He might send them to preach. And He gave them power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils. And to Simon He gave the name Peter, and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, and He named them Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder. And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew and Matthew, and Thomas, and James of Alphæus,<sup>v</sup> and Simon the Cananæan, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and He passed the whole night in the prayer of God. And when day was come, He called unto Him His disciples, and He chose twelve of them (whom also He named Apostles), Simon, whom He surnamed Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphæus, and Simon who is called Zelotes, and Jude the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, who was the traitor.

*^ and Thaddæus*

§ 47.—*The Sermon on the Plain.*

PART THE FIRST.

St. Luke vi. 17—26.

And coming down with them, He stood in a place on a plain, and the company of His disciples, and a very great multitude of people from all Judæa and Jerusalem, and the sea-coast both of Tyre and Sidon, who were come to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases. And they that were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the multitude sought to touch Him, for virtue went out from Him, and healed all. And He, lifting up His eyes on His disciples, said,

Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are ye that hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for you shall laugh.

Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Be glad in that day and rejoice, for

St. Luke vi. 23—26.

behold, your reward is great in heaven. For according to these things did their fathers to the prophets.

But wo to you that are rich, for you have your consolation.

Wo to you that are filled, for you shall hunger. Wo to you that now laugh, for you shall mourn and weep.

Wo to you when men shall bless you, for according to these things did their fathers to the false prophets.

§ 48.—*The Sermon on the Plain.*

PART THE SECOND.

St. Luke vi. 27—38.

But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that calumniate you. And to him that striketh thee on the one cheek, offer also the other. And him that taketh away from thee thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every one that asketh thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. And as



St. Luke vi. 31—38.

you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner.

And if you love them that love you, what thanks are to you? for sinners also love those that love them. And if you do good to them who do good to you, what thanks are to you? for sinners also do this. And if you lend to them of whom you hope to receive, what thanks are to you? for sinners also lend to sinners, for to receive as much.

But love ye your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing thereby, and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the Highest, for He is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given to you, good measure and pressed down and shaken together and run-

St. Luke vi. 38.

ning over shall they give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

§ 49.—*The Sermon on the Plain.*

PART THE THIRD.

St. Luke vi. 39—49.

And He spoke also to them a similitude, Can the blind lead the blind? do they not both fall into the ditch? The disciple is not above his master, but every one shall be perfect, if he be as his master.

And why seest thou the mote in thy brother's eye, but the beam that is in thy own eye thou considerest not? Or how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull the mote out of thy eye, when thou thyself seest not the beam in thy own eye? Hypocrite, cast first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to take out the mote from thy brother's eye.

For there is no good tree that bringeth forth evil fruit,

St. Luke vi. 44—49.

nor an evil tree that bringeth forth good fruit. For every tree is known by its fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor from a bramble bush do they gather the grape. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

And why call you Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Every one that cometh to Me, and heareth My words, and doth them, I will show you to whom he is like. He is like to a man building a house, who digged deep, and laid the foundation upon a rock, and when a flood came, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and it could not shake it, for it was founded on a rock. But he that heareth, and doth not, is like to a man building his house upon the earth without a foundation, against which the stream

St. Luke vi. 49.

beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.

§ 50.—*The Centurion's Servant.*

St. Luke vii. 1—10.

And when He had finished all His words in the hearing of the people, He entered into Capharnaum. And the servant of a certain centurion, who was dear to him, being sick, was ready to die. And when he had heard of Jesus, he sent to Him the ancients of the Jews, desiring Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought Him earnestly, saying to Him, He is worthy that Thou shouldst do this for him. For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

And Jesus went with them. And when He was now not far from the house, the centurion sent his friends to Him, saying, Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof. For which cause neither did I think my-

St. Luke vii. 7—10.

self worthy to come to Thee, but say the word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man subject to authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to this, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

And Jesus hearing this marvelled, and turning about to the multitude that followed Him, He said, Amen I say to you, I have not found so great faith, not even in Israel.

And they who were sent, being returned to the house, found the servant whole who had been sick.

St. Matt. viii. 5—13.

*(Another Account).*

And when He had entered into Capharnaum, there came to Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and is grievously tormented. And Jesus said to him, I will come and heal him.

And the centurion making answer, said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst

St. Matt. viii. 8—13.

enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man subject to authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to this, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

And Jesus hearing this, marvelled, and said to them that followed Him, Amen I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel.

And I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into the exterior darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And Jesus said to the centurion, Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee. And the servant was healed at the same hour.

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St. Mark iii. 20, 21.

And they came to a house,

St. Mark iii. 20, 21.

and the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when His friends had heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him. For they said: He is become mad.

§ 51.—*The Widow's Son raised.*

St. Luke vii. 11—16.

And it came to pass afterwards that He went into a city that is called Naim, and there went with Him His disciples and a great multitude. And when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of

St. Luke vii. 13—16.

his mother, and she was a widow: and a great multitude of the city was with her. Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her, He said to her, Weep not. And He came near and touched the bier. And they that carried it, stood still. And He said, Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother. And there came a fear on them all, and they glorified God, saying, a great prophet is risen up among us, and God hath visited His people.

§ 52.—*The disciples of St. John sent to our Lord.*

St. Matt. xi. 2—6.

St. Luke vii. 17—23.

And this rumour of Him went forth throughout all Judæa, and throughout all the country round about. And John's disciples told him of all these things.

Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, sending two of his disciples, he said to Him, Art Thou He that art to come, or look we for another?

And John called to him two of his disciples, and sent them to Jesus, saying, Art Thou He that art to come, or look we for another? And when the men were come unto Him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us to Thee, saying, Art Thou He that art to come, or look we for another?

(And in that same hour, He healed many of their diseases, and hurts, and evil spirits, and to many that were blind He gave sight.)

And Jesus making answer, said to them, Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. 'The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the Gospel preached to them.' And blessed is he that shall not be scandalized in Me.

And answering, He said to them, Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. 'The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the Gospel preached to them.' And blessed is he that shall not be scandalized in Me.

<sup>1</sup> Isaias xxix. 18, 19; xxxv. 5, 6; lxi. 1; xxvi. 19.



§ 53.—*Our Lord's witness to St. John Baptist.*

St. Matt. xi. 7—19.

And when they went their way, Jesus began to speak to the multitudes concerning John, What went you out into the desert to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? a man clothed in soft garments? Behold, they that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings. But what went you out to see? a prophet? yea, I tell you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold I send My Angel before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee.<sup>2</sup> Amen I say to you, there hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist, yet he that is the lesser in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away. For all the prophets

St. Luke vii. 24—35.

And when the messengers of John were departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John. What went you out into the desert to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? a man clothed in soft garments? Behold, they that are in costly apparel and live delicately, are in the houses of kings. But what went you out to see? a prophet? Yea, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send My Angel before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee. For I say to you, Amongst those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist. But he that is the lesser in the kingdom of God, is greater than he.

<sup>2</sup> Mal. iii. 1.

St. Matt. xi. 14—19.

and the law prophesied until John. And if you will receive it, He is Elias that is to come. He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like to children sitting in the market-place, who crying to their companions, say, We have piped to you, and you have not danced, we have lamented, and you have not mourned. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man that is a glutton and a wine-drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners. And wisdom is justified by her children.

St. Luke vii. 29—35.

And all the people hearing, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with John's baptism. But the Pharisees and the lawyers despised the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized by him.

And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like to children sitting in the market-place, and crying one to another, and saying, We have piped to you, and you have not danced, we have lamented, and you have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man is come eating and drinking, and you say, Behold a man that is a glutton and a wine-drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners. And wisdom is justified by all her children.

§ 54.—*The proud condemned  
and the humble chosen.*

St. Matt. xi. 20—30.

Then began He to upbraid the cities wherein were done the most of His miracles, for that they had not done penance. Wo to thee, Corozain, wo to thee, Bethsaida, for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in you, they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capharnaum, shalt thou be exalted up to heaven? thou shalt go down even unto hell. For if in Sodom had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, perhaps it had remained unto this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

At that time Jesus answered and said, I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the

St. Matt. xi. 26—30.

wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father, for so hath it seemed good in Thy sight. All things are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither doth any one know the Father but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him. Come to Me all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek, and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is sweet, and My burden light.

§ 55.—*Mary Magdalene  
comes to our Lord.*

St. Luke vii. 36—50; viii. 1—3.

And one of the Pharisees desired Him to eat with him. And He went into the house of the Pharisee, and sat down to meat.

And behold a woman that was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that He sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of

St. Luke vii. 38—43.

ointment, and standing behind at His feet, she began to wash His feet with tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

And the Pharisee, who had invited Him, seeing it, spoke within himself, saying, This man, if He were a prophet, would know surely who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him, that she is a sinner.

And Jesus answering, said to him, Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. But he said, Master, say it. A certain creditor had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which therefore of the two loveth him most?

Simon answering, said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And He said

St. Luke vii. 43—50.

to him, Thou hast judged rightly.

And turning to the woman, He said unto Simon, Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she with tears hath washed My feet, and with her hair hath wiped them. Thou gavest Me no kiss, but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but she with ointment hath anointed My feet. Wherefore I say to thee, Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less.

And He said to her, Thy sins are forgiven thee.

And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And He said to the woman, Thy faith hath made thee safe, go in peace.

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St. Luke viii. 1, 2.

And it came to pass, afterwards, that He travelled through the cities and towns, preaching and evangelizing the kingdom of God, and the twelve with Him. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and in-

St. Luke viii. 2, 3.

firmities, Mary, who is called Magdalene, out of whom seven devils were gone forth, and Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who ministered unto Him of their substance.



§ 56.—*The calumny of the Pharisees about Beelzebub.*

St. Matt. xii. 22—37.

St. Mark iii. 22—30.

Then was offered to Him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that he spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?

But the Pharisees hearing it, said, This man casteth not out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils.

And Jesus knowing their thoughts, said to them, Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand?

And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come upon you.

And the scribes who were come down from Jerusalem, said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of devils He casteth out devils.

And after He had called them together, He said to them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan be risen up against himself, he is divided, and cannot stand, but hath an end.

St. Matt. xii. 29—35.

Or how can any one enter into the house of a strong man, and rifle his goods, unless he first bind the strong man? and then he will rifle his house. He that is not with Me, is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth.

Therefore I say to you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but he that shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

Either make the tree good, and its fruit good, or make the tree evil, and its fruit evil. For by the fruit the tree is known. O generation of vipers, how can you speak good things, whereas you are evil? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of a good treasure bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out

St. Mark iii. 27—30.

No man can enter into the house of a strong man and rifle his goods, unless he first bind the strong man, and then he will rifle his house.

Amen I say to you, that all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and the blasphemies wherewith they shall blaspheme. But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, shall never have forgiveness, but shall be guilty of an everlasting sin. Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

St. Matt. xii. 36, 37.

St. Mark.

of an evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

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§ 57.—*The Scribes and Pharisees seeking for a sign. The close union of the disciples to our Lord.*

St. Matt. xii. 38—50.

St. Mark. iii. 31—35.

St. Luke. 19—21.

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, Master, we would see a sign from Thee.

Who answering said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in

St. Matt. xii. 41—44.

the heart of the  
earth three days  
and three nights.

The men of Ni-  
nive shall rise in  
judgment with this  
generation, and  
shall condemn it,  
because they did  
penance at the  
preaching of Jonas.  
And behold a  
greater than Jonas  
here. The queen  
of the south shall  
rise in judgment  
with this genera-  
tion, and shall con-  
demn it, because  
she came from the  
ends of the earth  
to hear the wisdom  
of Solomon, and  
behold a greater  
than Solomon here.

And when an  
unclean spirit is  
gone out of a man,  
he walketh through  
dry places seeking  
rest, and findeth  
none. Then he  
saith, I will return  
into my house from  
whence I came out.

St. Mark.

St. Luke.

St. Matt. xii. 45—49.

St. Mark iii. 31—34.

St. Luke viii. 19, 20.

And coming he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then he goeth, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is made worse than the first. So shall it be also to this wicked generation.

And He was yet speaking to the multitudes, behold His mother and His brethren stood without, seeking to speak to Him. And one said unto Him, Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without seeking Thee. But He answering him that told Him, said, Who is My mother, and who are My brethren? And stretching forth

And His mother and His brethren came, and standing without, sent unto Him, calling Him. And the multitude sat about Him, and they said to Him, Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren without seek for Thee. And answering them, He said, Who is My mother and My brethren? And looking round about on them who sat about Him, He

And His mother and brethren came unto Him, and they could not come at Him for the crowd. And it was told Him, Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to see Thee.



St. Matt. xii. 49, 50.	St. Mark iii. 34, 35.	St. Luke viii. 21.
His hand towards	saith, Behold My	Who answering,
His disciples, He	mother and My	said to them, My
said, Behold My	brethren. For who-	mother and My
mother and My	soever shall do	brethren are they
brethren. For	the will of God,	who hear the word
whosoever shall	he is My brother,	of God and do it.
do the will of My	and My sister, and	
Father, that is in	My mother.	
heaven, he is My		
brother, and sister,		
and mother.		

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§ 58.—*The Parable of the Sower.*

St. Matt. xiii. 1—9.	St. Mark iv. 1—9.	St. Luke viii. 4—8.
The same day	And again He	And when a very
Jesus going out of	began to teach by	great multitude
the house, sat by	the sea side, and a	was gathered to-
the sea side. And	great multitude	gether, and hast-
great multitudes	was gathered to-	ened out of the
were gathered to-	gether unto Him,	cities unto Him,
gether unto Him,	so that He went up	He spoke by a
so that He went	into a boat, and	similitude.
up into a boat and	sat in the sea; and	
sat, and all the	all the multitude	
multitude stood on	was upon the land	
the shore.	by the sea side.	
And He spoke	And He taught	
to them many	them many things	
things in parables,	in parables, and	
saying, Behold the	said unto them in	
sower went out to	His doctrine, Hear	
sow. And whilst	ye. Behold, the	The sower went
he soweth some	sower went out to	out to sow his

St. Matt. xiii. 4—9.

fell by the way side, and the birds of the air came and ate them up. And other some fell upon rocky ground, where they had not much earth, and they shot up immediately, because they had no depth of earth. And when the sun was risen they were scorched, and because they had not root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

And some fell upon good ground, and they brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, and some thirty fold. He that hath ears to ear, let him hear.

St. Mark iv. 4—9.

sow. And whilst he soweth, some fell by the way side, and the birds of the air came and ate it up. And other some fell upon rocky ground, where it had not much earth, and it shot up immediately, because it had no depth of earth. And when the sun was risen, it was scorched, and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

And some fell upon good ground, and brought forth fruit that grew up, and increased, and yielded, one thirty, another sixty, and another a hundred. And He said, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

St. Luke viii. 5—8.

seed. And while he soweth, some fell by the way side, and it was trodden down, and the birds of the air ate it up. And other some fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other some fell among thorns, and the thorns growing up with it, choked it.

And some fell upon good ground, and being sprung up, yielded fruit an hundred fold. Saying these things He cried out, He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

§ 59.—*The Parable of the Wheat and the Cockle.*

St. Matt. xiii. 10—17; 24—30.

And His disciples came and said to Him, Why speakest Thou to them in parables? Who answered and said to them, Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For he that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall abound, but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away that also which he hath. Therefore do I speak to them in parables, because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And the prophecy of Isaias is fulfilled in them, who saith, 'By hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is grown gross, and with their ears they have been dull of hearing, and their eyes they have shut, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand

St. Matt. xiii. 16, 17; 24—28.

with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.'<sup>3</sup> But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. For, amen, I say to you, many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them.

Another parable he proposed to them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle. And the servants of the good man of the house coming said to him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it cockle? And he said to them, an enemy hath done this. And the servants said to him, Wilt thou that we go, and gather it up?

<sup>3</sup> Isaias vi. 9, 10.

St. Matt. xiii. 29, 30.

And he said, No, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it. Suffer both to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the har-

St. Matt. xiii. 30.

vest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn.

§ 60.—*The Parables of the Seed, the Mustard Seed, and the Leaven.*

St. Matt. xiii. 31—35.

St. Mark iv. 26—34.

And He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the earth. And should sleep, and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring, and grow up whilst he knoweth not. For the earth of itself bringeth forth fruit, first the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full corn in the ear. And when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

Another parable He proposed unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. Which is the least indeed of all seeds, but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come, and dwell in the branches thereof.

And He said, To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? or to what parable shall we compare it. It is as a grain of mustard seed, which when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that are in the earth. And when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches, so that the birds of the air may dwell under the shadow thereof.

Another parable He spoke to them, The kingdom of



St. Matt. xiii. 34, 35.

heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened.

All these things Jesus spoke in parables to the multitudes, and without parables He did not speak to them. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying, I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world.<sup>4</sup>

St. Mark iv. 33, 34.

And with many such parables He spoke to them the word according as they were able to hear. And without parable He did not speak unto them; but apart, He explained all things to His disciples.

<sup>4</sup> Psalm lxxvii. 2.

§ 61.—*Explanation of the Parable of the Sower.*

St. Matt. xiii. 18—23.

St. Mark iv. 10—25.

St. Luke viii. 9—18.

And when He was alone, the twelve that were with Him asked Him the parable. And He said to them, To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to them that are without, all things are done in parables. That seeing they may see, and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand, lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

And He saith to them, Are you ignorant of this parable? and how shall you know all parables?

Hear you therefore the parable of

He that soweth, soweth the word.

Now the parable is this: The seed

St. Matt. xiii. 19—22.

the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, there cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart, this is he that received the seed by the way side.

And he that received the seed upon stony ground, this is he that heareth the word, and immediately receiveth it with joy. Yet hath he not root in himself, but it is only for a time, and when tribulation and persecution ariseth because of the word, he is presently scandalized.

And he that received the seed among thorns, is

St. Mark iv. 15—18.

And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown, and as soon as they have heard, immediately Satan cometh, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

And these likewise are they that are sown on the stony ground, who when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves, but are only for a time, and then when tribulation and persecution ariseth because of the word, they are presently scandalized.

And others there are who are sown among thorns ;

St. Luke viii. 12—14.

is the word of God. And they by the way side are they that hear, then the devil cometh, and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved.

Now they upon the rock, are they who when they hear, receive the word with joy, and these have no roots, for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation, they fall away.

And that which fell among thorns, are they who have

St. Matt. xiii. 22, 23.	St. Mark iv. 19—22.	St. Luke viii. 14—17.
he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and it becometh fruitless.	these are they that hear the word. And the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts after other things, entering in choke the word, and it becometh fruitless.	heard, and going their way, are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit.

But he that received the seed upon good ground, this is he that heareth the word, and understandeth, and beareth fruit, and yieldeth the one a hundredfold, and another sixty, and another thirty.	And these are they who are sown upon the good ground, who hear the word, and receive it, and yield fruit, the one thirty, another sixty, and another a hundred.	But that on the good ground, are they who in a good and very good heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.
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And He said to them, Doth a candle come in to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is no thing hid which shall not be made manifest, neither was it made secret, but that it may	Now no man lighting a candle covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed, but setteth it upon a candlestick, that they who come in may see the light. For there is not anything secret, that shall not be made manifest, nor
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St. Matt.

St. Mark iv. 23—25.

St. Luke viii. 18.

come abroad. If hidden, that shall  
any man have ears not be known, and  
to hear, let him come abroad.  
hear.

And He said to      Take heed there-  
them, Take heed fore how you hear.  
what you hear. In For whosoever  
what measure you hath, to him shall  
shall mete, it shall be given, and who  
be measured to you soever hath not,  
again, and more that also which he  
shall be given to thinketh he hath,  
you. For he that shall betaken away  
hath, to him shall from him.  
be given, and he  
that hath not, that  
also which he hath  
shall be aken  
away from him.



§ 62.—*Explanation of the Parable of the Cockle. Three others added.*

St. Matt. xiii. 36—53.

Then having sent away the multitudes, He came into the house, and His disciples came to Him, saying, Expound to us the parable of the cockle of the field. Who made answer and said to them, He that soweth the good seed, is the Son of Man. And the field is the world. And the good seed are the children of the kingdom. And the cockle are the children of the wicked one. And the enemy that sowed them is the devil. But the harvest is the end of the world. And the reapers are the angels. Even as cockle therefore is gathered up, and burnt with fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the just shine as the sun, in the

St. Matt. xiii. 44—51.

kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field, which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kind of fishes. Which, when it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Have ye understood all

St. Matt. xiii. 52.

these things? They say to Him, Yea. He said unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven, is like to a man that is a householder, who bring-

St. Matt. xiii. 53.

eth forth out of his treasure new things and old.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, He passed from thence.

§ 63.—*Our Lord stilling the storm.*

St. Matt. viii. 18—27.

St. Mark iv. 35—40.

St. Luke viii. 22—25.

And Jesus seeing  
great multitudes  
about Him, gave  
orders to pass over  
the water.

And He said to  
them that day, when  
evening was come,  
Let us pass over to  
the other side.

And a certain  
scribe came and  
said to Him, Mas-  
ter, I will follow  
Thee whitherso-  
ever Thou shalt  
go. And Jesus  
saith to Him, The  
foxes have holes,  
and the birds of  
the air nests, but  
the Son of Man  
hath not where to  
lay His head. And  
another of His dis-  
ciples said to Him,  
Lord, suffer me first  
to go and bury my  
father. But Jesus  
said to him, Follow  
Me, and let the dead  
bury their dead.

And when He  
entered into the  
boat, His disciples  
followed Him.

And sending  
away the multi-  
tude, they take  
Him even as He  
was in the ship,

And it came to  
pass on a certain  
day, that He went  
into a boat with  
His disciples, and

St. Matt. viii. 24—27.

And behold a great tempest arose in the sea, so that the boat was covered with waves, but He was asleep. And they came to Him, and awaked Him, saying, Lord, save us, we perish. And Jesus saith to them, Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith? Then rising up, He commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm. But the men wondered, saying, What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him?

St. Mark iv. 37—40.

and there were other ships with Him. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that the ship was filled. And He was in the hinder part of the ship, sleeping upon a pillow, and they awaked Him, and say to Him, Master, doth it not concern Thee that we perish? And rising up, He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was made a great calm. And He said to them, Why are you fearful? have you not faith yet? And they feared exceedingly, and they said one to another, Who is this (thinkest thou) that both wind and sea obey Him?

St. Luke viii. 22—25.

He said to them, Let us go over to the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. And when they were sailing, He slept. And there came down a storm of wind upon the lake, and they were filled, and were in danger. And they came and awaked Him, saying, Master, we perish. But He arising, rebuked the wind and the rage of the water, and it ceased, and there was a calm. And He said to them, Where is your faith? Who being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, Who is this, (think you) that He commandeth both the winds and the sea, and they obey Him?

§ 64.—*The legion of devils.*St. Matt. viii. 28—34;  
ix. 1.

St. Mark v. 1—21.

St. Luke viii. 26—40.

And when He was come on the other side of the water, into the country of the Gerasenes, there met Him two that were possessed with devils, coming out of the sepulchres, exceeding fierce, so that none could pass by that way.

And they came on the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. And as He went out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the sepulchres a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling in the sepulchres, and no man now could bind him, not even with chains. For having been often bound with fetters and chains, he had burst the chains, and broken the fetters in pieces, and no one could tame him. And he was always day and night in the monuments and in the mountains, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

And they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is over against Galilee. And when He was come forth to the land, there met Him a certain man who had a devil now a very long time, and he wore no clothes, neither did he abide in a house, but in the sepulchres.



St. Matt. viii. 29—31.

And behold they cried out, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus Son of God? art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?

St. Mark v. 6—11.

And seeing Jesus afar off, he ran and adored Him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus the Son of the most high God? I adjure Thee by God that Thou torment me not. For He said unto him, Go out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And He asked him, What is thy name? And he saith to Him, My name is Legion, for we are many.

St. Luke viii. 28—31.

And when he saw Jesus, he fell down before Him, and crying out with a loud voice, he said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of the most high God? I beseech Thee, do not torment me. For He commanded the unclean spirit to go out of the man. For many times it seized him, and he was bound with chains, and kept in fetters, and breaking the bonds he was driven by the devil into the deserts. And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? But he said, Legion, because many devils were entered into him.

And he besought Him much, that He would not drive him away out of the country. And there

And they besought Him that He would not command them to go into the abyss.

St. Matt. viii. 32—34.

And there was, not far from them, an herd of many swine feeding. And the devils besought Him, saying, If Thou cast us out hence, send us into the herd of swine. And He said to them, Go. But they going out went into the swine, and behold the whole herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and they perished in the waters.

And they that kept them fled, and coming into the city, told every thing, and concerning them that had been possessed by the devils.

St. Mark v. 11—15.

was there near the mountain a great herd of swine, feeding. And the spirits besought Him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And Jesus immediately gave them leave. And the unclean spirits going out, entered into the swine, and the herd with great violence was carried headlong into the sea, being about two thousand, and were stifled in the sea.

And they that fed them fled, and told it in the city and in the fields. And they went out to see what was done. And they came to Jesus, and they see him that was troubled with the devil, sitting, clothed, and right in his mind,

St. Luke viii. 32—35.

And there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain, and they besought Him that He would suffer them to enter into them. And He suffered them. The devils therefore went out of the man, and entered into the swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and was stifled.

Which when they that fed them saw done, they fled, and told it in the city and in the villages. And they went out to see what was done, and they came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at His feet

St. Matt. viii. 34; ix. 1.

And behold, the whole city went out to meet Jesus, and when they saw Him, they besought Him that He would depart from their coasts.

St. Mark v. 16—19.

and they were afraid. And they that had seen it, told them, in what manner he had been dealt with who had the devil, and concerning the swine. And they began to pray Him that He would depart from their coasts.

St. Luke viii. 36—39.

clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And they also that had seen, told them how he had been healed from the legion. And all the multitude of the country of the Gerasenes besought Him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear.

And when He went up into the ship, he that had been troubled with the devil, began to beseech Him that he might be with Him. And He admitted him not, but saith to him, Go into thy house to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had mercy on thee. And he went his way, and began to pub-

And He going up into the ship, returned back again.

Now the man out of whom the devils were departed, besought Him that he might be with Him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thy house, and tell how great things God hath done for thee. And he went through the whole city, publishing how great things Jesus

St. Matt. ix. 1.

St. Mark v. 20, 21.

St. Luke viii. 40.

lish in Decapolis had done for  
how great things him.  
Jesus had done for  
him, and all men  
wondered.

And entering into  
a boat, He passed  
over the water,  
and came into His  
own city.

And when Jesus  
had passed again  
in the ship to the  
other side, a great  
multitude assem-  
bled together unto  
Him, and He was  
nigh unto the sea.

And it came to  
pass, that when  
Jesus was returned,  
the multitude re-  
ceived Him, for  
they were all wait-  
ing for Him.

§ 65.—*The disciples of  
St. John.*

St. Matt. ix. 14—17.

Then came to Him the  
disciples of John, saying,  
Why do we and the Phari-  
sees fast often, but Thy dis-  
ciples do not fast? And  
Jesus said to them, Can the  
children of the bridegroom  
mourn as long as the bride-  
groom is with them? But  
the days will come, when the  
bridegroom shall be taken  
away from them, and then

St. Matt. ix. 16, 17.

they shall fast. And nobody  
putteth a piece of raw cloth  
unto an old garment. For it  
taketh away the fulness  
thereof from the garment, and  
there is made a greater rent.  
Neither do they put new  
wine into old bottles. Other-  
wise the bottles break, and  
the wine runneth out, and  
the bottles perish. But new  
wine they put into new bottles,  
and both are preserved.

§ 66.—*The daughter of Jairus and the woman with an issue of blood.*

St. Matt. ix. 18—26.

St. Mark v. 22—43.

St. Luke viii. 41—56.

As Hewas speak-  
ing these things  
unto them, behold  
a certain ruler  
came and adored  
Him, saying, Lord,  
my daughter is  
even now dead,  
but come, lay Thy  
hand upon her, and  
she shall live. And  
Jesus rising up fol-  
lowed him, with  
His disciples.

And there com-  
eth one of the  
rulers of the syna-  
gogue named Jai-  
rus, and seeing  
Him falleth down  
at His feet. And  
he besought Him  
much, saying : My  
daughter is at the  
point of death,  
come, lay Thy hand  
upon her, that she  
may be safe, and  
may live. And He  
went with him, and  
a great multitude  
followed Him, and  
they thronged Him.

And behold there  
came a man, whose  
name was Jairus,  
and he was a ruler  
of the synagogue,  
and he fell down  
at the feet of Jesus,  
beseeching Him  
that He would  
come into his  
house, for he had  
an only daughter,  
almost twelve years  
old, and she was  
dying. And it hap-  
pened, as He went,  
that He was  
thronged by the  
multitudes.

And behold a  
woman who was  
troubled with an  
issue of blood  
twelve years, came  
behind Him, and  
touched the hem of  
His garment.

And a woman  
who was under an  
issue of blood  
twelve years, and  
had suffered many  
things from many  
physicians, and  
had spent all that  
she had, and was  
nothing the better,  
but rather worse,  
when she had

And there was a  
certain woman,  
having an issue of  
blood twelve years,  
who had bestowed  
all her substance  
on physicians, and  
could not be healed  
by any. She came  
behind Him, and  
touched the hem of  
His garment, and



St. Matt. ix. 21.

For she said  
within herself, If  
I shall touch only  
His garment, I  
shall be healed.

St. Mark v. 27—33.

heard of Jesus,  
came in the crowd  
behind Him, and  
touched His gar-  
ment. For she  
said, If I shall  
touch but His gar-  
ment, I shall be  
healed. And forth-  
with the fountain  
of her blood was  
dried up, and she  
felt in her body  
that she was cured  
of the evil. And  
immediately Jesus  
knowing in Him-  
self the virtue that  
had gone out from  
Him, turning to  
the multitude, said,  
Who hath touched  
My garments?  
And His disciples  
said to Him, Thou  
seest the multitude  
thronging Thee,  
and sayest Thou,  
Who hath touched  
Me? And He  
looked about to see  
her who had done  
this. But the  
woman fearing and  
trembling, knowing

St. Luke viii. 45—48.

immediately the  
issue of her blood  
stopped. And Jesus  
said, Who is it that  
touched Me? And  
all denying, Peter  
and they that were  
with Him said,  
Master, the mul-  
titudes throng and  
press Thee, and  
dost Thou say,  
Who touched Me?  
And Jesus said,  
Some body hath  
touched Me, for I  
know that virtue is  
gone out from Me.  
And the woman  
seeing that she was  
not hid, came  
trembling, and fell  
down before His  
feet, and declared  
before all the  
people for what  
cause she had  
touched Him, and  
how she was im-  
mediately cured.  
But He said to her,  
Daughter, thy faith  
hath made thee  
whole, go thy way  
in peace.

St. Matt. ix. 22.

But Jesus turning  
and seeing her,  
said, Be of good  
heart, daughter, thy  
faith hath made thee  
whole. And the  
woman was healed  
from that hour.

St. Mark v. 33—38.

what was done in  
her, came and fell  
down before Him,  
and told Him all  
the truth. And He  
said to her, Dau-  
ghter, thy faith  
hath made thee  
whole, go in peace,  
and be thou whole  
of thy disease.

St. Luke viii. 49—51.

While He was  
yet speaking, some  
come from the ruler  
of the synagogue's  
house, saying, Thy  
daughter is dead,  
why dost thou  
trouble the master  
any farther? But  
Jesus having heard  
the word that was  
spoken, saith to the  
ruler of the syna-  
gogue, Fear not,  
only believe.

As He was yet  
speaking, there  
cometh one to the  
ruler of the syna-  
gogue, saying to  
him, Thy daughter  
is dead, trouble  
Him not. And Je-  
sus hearing this  
word, answered the  
father of the maid,  
Fear not, believe  
only, and she shall  
be safe.

And He ad-  
mitted not any man  
to follow Him, but  
Peter, and James,  
and John the  
brother of James.  
And they come to  
the house of the

And when He  
was come to the  
house, He suffered  
not any man to go  
in with Him, but  
Peter, and James,  
and John, and the  
father and mother

St. Matt. ix. 23—25.

And when Jesus was come into the house of the ruler, and saw the minstrels and the multitude making a rout, He said, Give place, for the girl is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn. And when the multitude was put forth, He went in and took her by the hand. And the maid arose.

St. Mark v. 38—42.

ruler of the synagogue; and He seeth a tumult, and people weeping and wailing much. And going in, He saith to them, Why make you this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn. But He having put them all out, taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with Him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And taking the damsel by the hand, He saith to her, Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted, damsel (I say to thee) arise. And immediately the damsel rose up, and walked; and she was twelve years old.

St. Luke viii. 51—55.

of the maiden. And all wept and mourned for her. But He said, Weep not, the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. But He taking her by the hand, cried out, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit returned, and she arose immediately.

St. Matt. ix. 26.

And the fame  
hereof went abroad  
into all that coun-  
try.

St. Mark v. 42, 43.

And they were  
astonished with a  
great astonish-  
ment. And He  
charged them  
strictly that no  
man should know  
it, and commanded  
that something  
should be given  
her to eat.

St. Luke viii. 55, 56.

And He bid  
them give her to  
eat. And her pa-  
rents were aston-  
ished, whom He  
charged to tell no  
man what was  
done.

§ 67.—*Healing of two blind men, and one dumb.*

St. Matt. ix. 27--34.

And as Jesus passed from thence, there followed Him two blind men crying out and saying, Have mercy on us, O Son of David. And when He was come to the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus saith to them, Do you believe that I can do this unto you? They say to Him, Yea, Lord. Then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it done unto you. And their eyes were opened, and

St. Matt. ix. 31--34.

Jesus strictly charged them, saying, See that no man know this.

But they going out, spread His fame abroad in all that country. And when they were gone out, behold they brought Him a dumb man, possessed with a devil. And after the devil was cast out, the dumb man spoke, and the multitudes wondered, saying, Never was the like seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, By the prince of devils He casteth out devils.



§ 68.—*Our Lord without honour in His own country.*

St. Matt. xiii. 54—58; ix. 35.

St. Mark vi. 1—6.

And coming into His own country, He taught them in their synagogues, so that they wondered and said, How came this Man by this wisdom and miracles? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Jude? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence therefore hath He all these things? And they were scandalized in regard of Him.

But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And He wrought not many miracles there, because of their unbelief. And Jesus went about all the cities and towns, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease, and every infirmity.

And going out from thence, He went into His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the sabbath was come, He began to teach in the synagogue, and many hearing Him were in admiration at His doctrine, saying, How came this man by all these things? and what wisdom is this that is given to Him, and such miracles as are wrought by His hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joseph, and Jude, and Simon? are not also His sisters here with us? And they were scandalized in regard of Him.

And Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house, and among his own kindred. And He could not do any miracles there, only that He cured a few that were sick, laying His hands upon them, and He wondered because of their unbelief, and He went through the villages round about teaching.

§ 69.—*The Apostles sent out to preach.*St. Matt. ix. 36—38 ;  
x. 1—15.

St. Mark vi. 7—11.

St. Luke ix. 1—5.

And seeing the multitudes, He had compassion on them, because they were distressed, and lying like sheep that have no shepherd. Then He saith to His disciples, The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth labourers into His harvest.

And having called His twelve disciples together, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases, and all manner of infirmities.

And He called the twelve, and began to send them two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.

Then calling together the twelve apostles, He gave them power and authority over all devils, and to heal diseases. And He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to cure the sick.

And the names of the twelve Apostles are these, the

St. Matt. x. 2—8.

St. Mark.

St. Luke.

first, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, James the son of Zèbedee, and John his brother, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the publican, and James the son of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. These twelve Jesus sent, commanding them, saying, Go ye not into the way of the gentiles, and into the cities of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And going, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils,

St. Matt. x. 9—14.

St. Mark vi. 8—11.

St. Luke ix. 3—5.

freely have you received, freely give.

Do not possess gold nor silver, nor money in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff, for the workman is worthy of his meat.

And into whatsoever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till you go thence. And when you come into the house, salute it, saying, Peace be to this house. And if that house be worthy, your peace shall come upon it; but if it be not worthy, your peace shall return to you.

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your

And He commanded them that they should take nothing for the journey, but a staff only, no scrip, no bread, nor money in their purse. But to be shod with sandals, and that they should not put on two coats.

And He said to them, Wheresoever you shall enter into an house, there abide till you depart from that place.

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you,

And He said to them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money, neither have two coats.

And whatsoever house you shall enter into, abide there, and depart not from thence.

And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go

St. Matt. x. 14—15.

St. Mark vi. 11.

St. Luke ix. 5.

words, going forth out of that house or city shake off the dust from your feet. Amen I say to you it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judg- ment than for that city.	going forth from thence, shake off the dust from your feet for a testimony to them.	out of that city, shake off even the dust of your feet, for a testimony against them.
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§ 70.—*Our Lord's charge to  
His Apostles.*

St. Matt. x. 16—42.

Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents and simple as doves. But beware of men. For they will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors, and before kings for My sake, for a testimony to them and to the gentiles. But when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what to speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.

The brother also shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the son, and the children shall rise up against their parents and shall put them to death. And you shall be hated by all men for My name's sake, but he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved. And when they shall persecute you in this city,

St. Matt. x. 23—31.

flee into another. Amen I say to you, you shall not finish all the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man come. The disciple is not above the master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?

Therefore fear them not. For nothing is covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid that shall not be known. That which I tell you in the dark, speak ye in the light, and that which you hear in the ear, preach ye upon the house-tops. And fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear Him that can destroy both soul and body into hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father? But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore,

St. Matt. x. 32—37.

better are you than many sparrows.

Every one therefore that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father Who is in heaven. But he that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father Who is in heaven.

Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth. I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's enemies shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me,

St. Matt. x. 38—42.

is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not up his cross, and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life, shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for Me, shall find it.

He that receiveth you, receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive the reward of a prophet, and he that receiveth a just man in the name of a just man, shall receive the reward of a just man. And whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, amen I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.

§ 71.—*Death of St. John Baptist.*St. Matt. xi. 1 ;  
xiv. 1—13.

St. Mark vi. 12—29.

St. Luke ix. 6—9 ;  
iii. 19, 20.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He passed from thence, to teach and preach in their cities.

At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the fame of Jesus. And he said to his servant, This is John the Baptist : he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works show forth themselves in him.

And going forth they preached that men should do penance, and they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

And King Herod heard (for His name was made manifest), and he said, John the Baptist is risen again from the dead, and therefore mighty works show forth themselves in him. And others said, It is Elias. But others said, It is a prophet, as one of the prophets. Which Herod hearing, said, John whom I beheaded, he is risen again from the dead.

And going out, they went about through the towns, preaching the Gospel, and healing everywhere.

Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all things that were done by Him, and he was in a doubt, because it was said by some, that John was risen from the dead, but by other some, that Elias hath appeared, and by others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he sought to see Him.

[For Herod had

[For Herod him-

[But Herod the

St. Matt. xiv. 3—7.

apprehended John and bound him, and put him into prison, because of Herodias, his brother's wife. For John said to him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And having a mind to put him to death, he feared the people, because they esteemed him as a prophet.

St. Mark vi. 17—21.

self had sent and apprehended John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias the wife of Philip his brother, because he had married her. For John said to Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Now Herodias laid snares for him, and was desirous to put him to death, and could not, for Herod feared John, knowing him to be a just and holy man, and kept him, and when he heard him, did many things, and he heard him willingly.

St. Luke iii. 19, 20.

tetrarch, when he was reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, he added this also above all, and shut up John in prison.]

But on Herod's birth-day the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised

And when a convenient day was come, Herod made a supper for his birth-day, for the princes, and tribunes, and chief

St. Matt. xiv. 7, 8.

St. Mark vi. 22—25.

St. Luke.

with an oath, to  
give her whatso-  
ever she would ask  
of him.

men of Galilee.  
And when the  
daughter of the  
same Herodias  
had come in, and  
had danced, and  
pleased Herod,  
and them that  
were at table with  
him, the king said  
to the damsel, Ask  
of me what thou  
wilt, and I will  
give it thee. And  
he swore to her,  
Whatsoever thou  
shalt ask I will  
give thee, though  
it be the half of  
my kingdom.

But she being  
instructed before  
by her mother,  
said, Give me here  
in a dish the head  
of John the Baptist.

Who when she  
was gone out, said  
to her mother,  
What shall I ask?  
But she said, The  
head of John the  
Baptist. And when  
she was come in  
immediately with  
haste to the king,  
she asked, saying,  
I will that forthwith  
thou give me in a  
dish the head of  
John the Baptist.



St. Matt. xiv. 9—13.

And the king was struck sad, yet because of his oath, and for them that sat with him at table, he commanded it to be given. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a dish, and it was given to the damsel, and she brought it to her mother.

And his disciples came and took the body, and buried it, and came and told Jesus.]

Which when Jesus had heard He retired from thence by a boat, into a desert place apart, and the multitudes having heard of it, followed Him on foot out of the cities.

St. Mark vi. 26—29.

And the king was struck sad, yet because of his oath, and because of them that were with him at table, he would not displease her. But sending an executioner, he commanded that his head should be brought in a dish. And he beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a dish, and gave it to the damsel, and the damsel gave it to her mother.

Which his disciples hearing came, and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.]

St. Luke.

§ 72.—*The feeding of five thousand men.*

St. Matt. xiv. 14—21.

St. Mark vi. 30—44.

And the Apostles coming together unto Jesus, related to Him all things that they had done and taught. And He said to them, Come apart into a desert place, and rest a little. For there were many coming and going, and they had not so much as time to eat. And going up into a ship, they went into a desert place apart. And they saw them going away, and many knew, and they ran flocking thither on foot from all the cities, and were there before them.

And He coming forth saw a great multitude, and had

And Jesus going out saw a great multitude, and He had

§ 72.—*The feeding of five thousand men.*

St. Luke ix. 10—17.

And the Apostles, when they were returned, told Him all they had done. And taking them, He went aside into a desert place apart, which belonged to Bethsaida. Which when the people knew they followed Him.

St. John vi. 1—13.

After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw the miracles which He did on them that were diseased. Jesus therefore went up into a mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. Now the pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand.

When Jesus therefore had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh to Him, He said to Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this He said to try him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little.

And He received them, and spoke to them of the

St. Matt. xiv. 15—20.

compassion on them, and healed their sick.

And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the hour is now past, send away the multitudes, that going into the towns they may buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said to them, They have no need to go, give you them to eat. They answered Him, We have not here, but five loaves and two fishes. He said to them, Bring them hither to Me.

And when He had commanded the multitudes to sit down upon the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took

St. Mark vi. 35—41.

compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and He began to teach them many things.

And when the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the hour is now past, send them away, that going into the next villages and towns, they may buy themselves bread. And He answering said to them, Give you them to eat. And they said to Him, Let us go and buy bread for two hundred pence, and we will give them to eat. And He saith to them, How many loaves have you? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

And He commanded them that they should make them all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties. And when He had taken the five loaves, and the two fishes, looking up to heaven, He blessed, and broke the loaves, and gave to His

St. Luke ix. 12—16.

kingdom of God, and healed them who had need of healing.

St. John vi. 8—11.

Now the day began to decline. And the twelve came and said to Him, Send away the multitude, that going into the towns and villages round about, they may lodge and get meat, for we are here in a desert place. But He said to them, Give you them to eat. And they said, We have no more than five loaves and two fishes, unless perhaps we should go and buy victuals for all this multitude.

One of His disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to Him, There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves, and two fishes, but what are these among so many?

Now there were about five thousand men. And He said to His disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company. And they did so, and made them all sit down. And taking the five loaves and the two fishes, He looked up to heaven, and blessed them, and He broke, and distributed to His disciples, to set

Then Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. The men therefore sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks, He distributed to them that were sat down. In like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would.



St. Matt. xiv. 21.

up what remained, twelve full baskets of fragments. And the number of them that did eat was five thousand men, besides women and children.

St. Mark vi. 42—44.

disciples to set before them, and the two fishes He divided among them all. And they all did eat, and were filled. And they took up the leavings, twelve full baskets of fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat, were five thousand men.

St. Luke ix. 17.

before the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled. And there were taken up of fragments that remained to them, twelve baskets.

St. John vi. 12, 13.

And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost. They gathered up therefore, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten.

§ 73.—*Our Lord walking on the waters.*

St. Matt. xiv. 22—36.

St. Mark vi. 45—56.

St. John vi. 14—24.

And forthwith Jesus obliged His disciples to go up into the boat, and to go before Him over the water, till He dismissed the people. And having dismissed the multitude, He went up into a mountain alone to pray. And when it was evening, He was there alone.

And immediately He obliged His disciples to go up into the ship, that they might go before Him over the water to Bethsaida, whilst He dismissed the people. And when He had dismissed them, He went up to the mountain to pray. And when it was late, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and Himself alone on the land.

Now those men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said, This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world. Jesus therefore, when He knew that they would come to take Him by force and make Him king, fled again into the mountain Himself alone. And when evening was come, His disciples went down to the sea.

But the boat in the midst of the sea was tossed with the waves, for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night, He came to them walking upon the sea. And they seeing Him walking upon the sea,

And seeing them labouring in rowing (for the wind was against them) and about the fourth watch of the night, He cometh to them walking upon the sea, and He would have passed by them. But they seeing

And when they had gone up into a ship, they went over the sea to Capharnaum, and it was now dark, and Jesus was not come unto them. And the sea arose, by reason of a great wind that blew. When they

St. Matt. xiv. 26—31.

were troubled, saying, It is an apparition. And they cried out for fear. And immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, Be of good heart, it is I, fear ye not.

St. Mark vi. 49, 50.

Him walking upon the sea, thought it was an apparition, and they cried out. For they all saw Him, and were troubled. And immediately He spoke with them, and said to them, Have a good heart, it is I, fear ye not.

St. John vi. 19, 20.

had rowed there-fore about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking upon the sea and drawing nigh to the ship, and they were afraid. But He saith to them, It is I, fear ye not.

And Peter, making answer, said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee upon the waters. And He said, Come. And Peter going down out of the boat, walked upon the water to come to Jesus. But seeing the wind strong, he was afraid, and when he began to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretching forth His hand, took hold of him, and said to him, O

St. Matt. xiv. 32—34.

St. Mark vi. 51—53.

St. John vi. 21—23.

thou of little faith,  
why didst thou  
doubt?

And when they  
were come up into  
the boat, the wind  
ceased. And they  
that were in the  
boat came and  
adored Him, say-  
ing, Indeed Thou  
art the Son of God.

And when they  
had passed over,  
they came into the  
country of Genesar.

And He went up  
to them into the  
ship, and the wind  
ceased, and they  
were far more as-  
tonished within  
themselves. For  
they understood  
not concerning the  
loaves, for their  
heart was blinded.

And when they  
had passed over,  
they came into the  
land of Genesareth,  
and set to the  
shore.

They were will-  
ing therefore to  
take Him into the  
ship, and presently  
the ship was at the  
land to which they  
were going.

The next day, the  
multitude that  
stood on the other  
side of the sea, saw  
that there was no  
other boat there  
but one, and that  
Jesus had not en-  
tered into the ship  
with His disciples,  
but that His dis-  
ciples were gone  
away alone. But  
other ships came  
in from Tiberias,  
nigh unto the place  
where they had  
eaten the bread,  
the Lord giving  
thanks. When



St. Matt. xiv. 35, 36.

St. Mark vi. 54—56.

St. John vi. 24.

therefore the multitude saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they took shipping, and came to Capharnaum, seeking for Jesus.

And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent into all that country, and brought to Him all that were sick. And they besought Him that they might touch but the hem of His garment. And as many as touched, were made whole.

And when they were gone out of the ship, immediately they knew Him. And running through that whole country, they began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard He was. And whithersoever He entered, into towns or into villages or cities, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch but the hem of His garment, and as many as touched Him were made whole.

§ 74.—*Our Lord's Discourse  
on the Bread from heaven.*

St. John vi. 25—72.

And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, Rabbi, when camest Thou hither? Jesus answered them, and said, Amen, amen, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of Man will give you. For Him hath God, the Father, sealed.

They said therefore unto Him, What shall we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered, and said to them, This is the work of God, that you believe in Him Whom He hath sent. They said therefore to Him, What sign therefore dost Thou show, that we may see, and may believe Thee? What dost Thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.<sup>5</sup>

St. John vi. 32—40.

Then Jesus said to them, Amen, amen, I say to you, Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world.

They said therefore unto Him, Lord, give us always this bread. And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life, he that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, that you also have seen Me, and you believe not. All that the Father giveth to Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me, I will not cast out. Because I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. Now this is the will of the Father Who sent Me, that of all that He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again in the last day. And this is the will of My Father that sent Me, that every one

<sup>5</sup> Psalm lxxviii. 24.

St. John vi. 41—49.

who seeth the Son, and believeth in Him, may have life everlasting, and I will raise him up in the last day.

The Jews therefore murmured at Him, because He had said, I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then saith He, I came down from heaven?

Jesus therefore answered, and said to them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me, except the Father, Who hath sent Me, draw Him, and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to Me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, but He Who is of God, He hath seen the Father. Amen, amen, I say unto you, He that believeth in Me, hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the

St. John vi. 50—58.

desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give, is My flesh, for the life of the world.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?

Then Jesus said to them, Amen, amen, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me. This is the

St. John vi. 59—65.

bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live for ever.

These things He said, teaching in the synagogue in Capharnaum. Many therefore of His disciples, hearing it, said, This saying is hard, and who can hear it?

But Jesus, knowing in Himself, that His disciples murmured at this, said to them, Doth this scandalize you? If then you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus

St. John vi. 66—72.

knew from the beginning, who they were that did not believe, and who he was that would betray Him. And He said, Therefore did I say to you, that no man can come to Me, unless it be given him by My Father.

After this many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Then Jesus said to the twelve, Will you also go away? And Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known, that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? Now He meant Judas Iscariot the son of Simon, for this same was about to betray Him, whereas he was one of the twelve.

§ 75.—*Dispute with the Pharisees about Traditions.*

St. Matt. xv. 1—20.

Then came to Him from Jerusalem scribes and Pharisees, saying, Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

But He answering, said to them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition? For God said, Honour thy father and mother, and, He that

St. Mark vii. 1—23.

And there assembled together unto Him the Pharisees and some of the scribes, coming from Jerusalem. And when they had seen some of His disciples eat bread with common, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, eat not without often washing their hands, holding the tradition of the ancients, and when they come from the market, unless they be washed, they eat not, and many other things there are that have been delivered to them to observe, the washings of cups and of pots, and of brazen vessels, and of beds. And the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, Why do not Thy disciples walk according to the tradition of the ancients, but they eat bread with common hands?

But He answering, said to them, Well did Isaias prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from



St. Matt. xv. 5—11.

shall curse father or mother, let him die the death.<sup>1</sup> But you say, Whoever shall say to father or mother, The gift whatsoever proceedeth from me shall profit thee, and he shall not honour his father or his mother, and you have made void the commandment of God for your tradition. Hypocrites, well hath Isaias prophesied of you, saying, This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain do they worship Me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men.<sup>2</sup>

And having called together the multitudes unto Him, He said to them, Hear ye and understand. Not that which

St. Mark vii. 7—15.

Me. And in vain do they worship Me, teaching doctrines and precepts of men, For leaving the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, the washings of pots and of cups, and many other things you do like to these. And He said to them, Well do you make void the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother, and, He that shall curse his father or mother, dying let him die. But you say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, Corban (which is a gift), whatsoever is from me shall profit thee. And farther you suffer him not to do anything for his father or mother, making void the word of God by your own tradition, which you have given forth. And many other such like things you do.

And calling again the multitude unto Him, He said to them, Hear ye Me all and understand. There is nothing

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xx. 10; xxi. 6.<sup>2</sup> Isaias xxix. 13.

St. Matt. xv. 12—19.

goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

Then came His disciples, and said to Him, Dost Thou know that the Pharisees, when they heard this word, were scandalized? But He answering, said, Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone, they are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit. And Peter answering, said to Him, Expound to us this parable. But He said, Are you also yet without understanding? Do you not understand, that whatsoever entereth into the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy. But the things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man. For from the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornica-

St. Mark vii. 15—22.

from without a man that entering into him, can defile him. But the things which come from a man, those are they that defile a man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

And when He was come into the house from the multitude, His disciples asked Him the parable. And He saith to them, So are you also without knowledge? understand you not that everything from without, entering into a man cannot defile him. Because it entereth not into his heart, but goeth into the belly, and goeth out into the privy, purging all meats?

But, He said, that the things which proceed out of a man, they defile a man. For from within out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness,

St. Matt. xv. 20.

tions, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands doth not defile a man.

St. Mark vii. 23.

wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within, and defile a man.

§ 76.—*The Syrophœnician Woman.*

St. Matt. xv. 21—28.

And Jesus went from thence, and retired into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

And behold a woman of Canaan who came out of those coasts, crying out, said to Him, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil. Who answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us.

And He answering, said, I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel. But she came and adored Him, saying, Lord, help me. Who answering,

St. Mark vii. 24—30.

And rising from thence, He went into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And entering into a house, He would that no man should know it, and He could not be hid.

For a woman as soon as she heard of Him, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, came in, and fell down at His feet. For the woman was a gentile, a Syrophœnician born. And she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

Who said to her, Suffer first the children to be filled, for it is not good to take the bread of the children, and cast it to the dogs.

St. Matt. xv. 27, 28.

said, It is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to the dogs.

But she said, Yea, Lord, for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters. Then Jesus answering, said to her, O woman, great is thy faith, be it done to thee as thou wilt. And her daughter was cured from that hour.

St. Mark vii. 28—30.

But she answered, and said to Him, Yea, Lord, for the whelps also eat under the table of the crumbs of the children. And He said to her, For this saying go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come into her house, she found the girl lying upon the bed, and that the devil was gone out.

§ 77.—*The deaf and dumb  
healed.*

St. Mark vii. 31—37.

And again going out of the coasts of Tyre, He came by Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coast of Decapolis. And they bring to Him one deaf and dumb, and they besought Him that He would lay His hand upon him. And taking him from the multitude apart, He put His fingers into his ears, and spitting, He touched his tongue, and looking up to heaven, He groaned, and said

St. Mark vii. 35—37.

to him, Ephpheta, which is, Be thou opened. And immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke right. And He charged them that they should tell no man. But the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal did they publish it. And so much the more did they wonder, saying, He hath done all things well, He hath made both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.



§ 78.—*The feeding of four thousand men.*

St. Matt. xv. 29—39.

St. Mark viii. 1—10.

And when Jesus had passed away from thence, He came nigh the sea of Galilee, and going up into a mountain, He sat there. And there came to Him great multitudes, having with them the dumb, the blind, the lame, the maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at His feet, and He healed them. So that the multitudes marvelled, seeing the dumb speak, the lame walk, the blind see, and they glorified the God of Israel.

And Jesus called together His disciples, and said, I have compassion on the multitudes, because they have been with Me now three days, and have not what to eat, and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

And the disciples say unto Him, Whence, then, should

In those days again, when there was a great multitude, and had nothing to eat, calling His disciples together, he saith to them, I have compassion on the multitude, for behold they have now been with Me three days, and have not what to eat. And if I shall send them away fasting to their home, they will faint in the way, for some of them came from afar off.

And His disciples answered Him, Whence can any one fill

St. Matt. xv. 34—39.

we have so many loaves in the desert as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus said to them, How many loaves have you? But they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

And He commanded the multitude to sit down upon the ground. And taking the seven loaves and the fishes, and giving thanks, He brake, and gave to His disciples, and the disciples gave to the people. And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took up seven baskets full, of what remained of the fragments. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside children and women. And having dismissed the multitude, He went up into a boat and came into the coasts of Magedan.

St. Mark viii. 5—10.

them here with bread in the desert? And He asked them, How many loaves have ye? But they said, Seven.

And taking the seven loaves, giving thanks, He brake, and gave to His disciples for to set before them, and they set them before the people. And they had a few little fishes, and He blessed them, and commanded them to be set before them. And they did eat, and were filled, and they took up that which was left of the fragments, seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand, and He sent them away. And immediately going up into a ship with His disciples, He came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

§ 79.—*The leaven of the Pharisees.*

St. Matt. xvi. 1—12.

And there came to Him the Pharisees and Sadducees tempting, and they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven.

But He answered and said to them, When it is evening, you say, It will be fair weather, for the sky is red. And in the morning, To-day there will be a storm, for the sky is red and lowering. You know then how to discern the face of the sky, and can you not know the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. And He left them and went away.

And when His disciples were come over the water, they had forgotten to take bread. Who said to them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But they thought within themselves, saying, Because we have taken no bread.

And Jesus knowing it, said,

St. Mark viii. 11—21.

And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with Him, asking Him a sign from heaven, tempting Him.

And sighing deeply in spirit, He saith, Why doth this generation ask a sign? Amen I say to you, If a sign shall be given to this generation. And leaving them, He went up again into the ship, and passed to the other side of the water.

And they forgot to take bread, and they had but one loaf with them in the ship. And He charged them, saying, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, Because we have no bread.

Which Jesus knowing, saith

St. Matt. xvi. 8—12.

Why do you think within yourselves, O ye of little faith, for that you have no bread? Do you not yet understand, neither do you remember the five loaves among five thousand men, and how many baskets you took up? Nor the seven loaves among four thousand men, and how many baskets you took up? Why do you not understand that it was not concerning bread I said to you, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Then they understood that He said not that they should beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

St. Mark viii. 17—21.

to them, Why do you reason, because you have no bread? do you not yet know nor understand? have you still your heart blinded? Having eyes, see you not? and having ears, hear you not? neither do you remember. When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took you up? They say to Him, Twelve. When also the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets of fragments took you up? And they say to Him, Seven. And He said to them, How do you yet not understand?

80.—*The blind man at  
Bethsaida.*

St. Mark viii. 22—26.

And they came to Bethsaida, and they brought to him a blind man, and they besought Him that He would touch him. And taking the blind man by the hand, He led him out of the town, and spitting upon his eyes, laying His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And

St. Mark viii. 24—26.

looking up, he said, I see men as it were trees, walking. After that again, He laid His hands upon his eyes, and he began to see, and was restored, so that he saw all things clearly. And He sent him into his house, saying, Go into thy house, and if thou enter into the town, tell nobody.



§ 81.—*The Confession of St. Peter.*

St. Matt. xvi. 13—20.

And Jesus came into the quarters of Cæsarea Philippi, and He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that the Son of Man is? But they said, Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

Jesus saith to them, But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answering, said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My

St. Mark viii. 27—30.

And Jesus went out, and His disciples, into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi. And in the way, He asked His disciples, saying to them, Whom do men say that I am? Who answered Him, saying, John the Baptist, but some Elias, and others as one of the prophets.

Then He saith to them, But whom do you say that I am? Peter answering, said to Him, Thou art the Christ.

St. Luke ix. 18—21.

And it came to pass, as He was alone praying, His disciples also were with Him, and He asked them, saying, Whom do the people say that I am? But they answered, and said, John the Baptist, but some say Elias, and others say, that one of the former prophets is risen again.

And He said to them, But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answering, said, The Christ of God.

St. Matt. xvi. 18—20.

St. Mark viii. 30.

St. Luke ix. 21.

Father Who is in heaven. And I say to thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.

Then He commanded His disciples, that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

And He strictly charged them that they should not tell any man of Him.

But He strictly charging them, commanded they should tell this to no man.

## NOTE II.

*Harmonistic Questions as to the second period of our Lord's Public Life.*

THE long period of the Life of our Lord, which is comprised in the foregoing portion of the Harmony, contains many incidents as to which questions have been raised of the kind which are treated of in these notes. Some of these, which refer to actions or sayings of our Lord which are assigned by St. Luke to a later period, though St. Matthew and St. Mark seem to place them in this, will be dealt with in the next volume, where that part of St. Luke's Gospel to which we refer has to be considered. The rest may be thus enumerated. There are questions of this kind as to (1) the Sermon on the Plain (§§ 47—49. St. Luke vi. 17—49), (2) the healing of the Centurion's Servant (§ 50. St. Luke vii. 1—10; St. Matt. viii. 5—13), (3) the Unction of our Lord mentioned by St. Luke (§ 55; St. Luke vii. 36—50), (4) our Blessed Lady and our Lord's 'Brethren' seeking to speak with Him (§ 57. St. Matt. xii. 46—50; St. Mark iii. 31—35; St. Luke viii. 19—21), (5) the demoniacs in the land of the Gerasenes (§ 64. St. Matt. viii. 28—34; St. Mark v. 1—21; St. Luke viii. 26—40), (6) Herod's hearing of our Lord after the death of St. John Baptist (§ 71. St. Matt. xiv. 1; St. Mark vi. 14; St. Luke ix. 7).

1. *The Sermon on the Plain* (§§ 47—49. St. Luke vi. 17—49).

The question here is as to the distinctness of this Sermon from that in St. Matthew v., vi., vii., which is known as the Sermon on the Mount. This question has been incidentally mentioned in the Preface to this volume, and some more remarks to the same purpose will be found in the Essay on the Parables which is subjoined.

We may repeat here what has already been said as to a similar instance, in which incidents which are distinguished by the Evangelists have been confounded by their commentators. If it were not for the number of names of authority which may be cited in favour of the opinion which identifies

the Sermons, there would seem to be no reason for entering on the question at all, at least in the case of those who have formed a clear and definite idea of the object and method and character of the several Gospels. For such persons it is almost enough that St. Luke gives the Sermon on the Plain, for they are already prepared to find him choosing, wherever he can, incidents and discourses which are parallel to what has been already given by St. Matthew or St. Mark rather than the same incidents and discourses. This impression is strongly confirmed by the number of touches which seem to have been added to the picture for the purpose of silently intimating the difference between the circumstances of this Sermon and those of that which St. Matthew has related. Such touches are the mention of a multitude of a promiscuous character, including some even from Tyre and Sidon, and the specifying of the time and place as different from the time and place of the Sermon in St. Matthew. For St. Luke tells us that the Sermon which he relates was delivered after the election of the Twelve Apostles, which St. Mark places after the Second Pasch and the beginning of the persecution of our Lord on account of the Sabbath. St. Luke also speaks of the place as 'a spot on a plain.' As he is the Evangelist who wrote rather for persons at a distance from and unacquainted with the Holy Land, he is the one of the three first Evangelists who is least careful to notice particular spots. Thus it is difficult to imagine that he inserted the words, 'a place in a plain,' for any other reason than to help his readers to understand the difference between this Sermon and the other. Thus it is not an argument at all to the point to say that a 'place in a plain,' or 'a level place,' may designate a piece of level ground on the side of a mountain, and that the same place might therefore have been spoken of by St. Matthew as a mountain. If such an explanation might be allowed in any case, it could not be admitted in this. St. Luke is not in the habit of telling us whether this or that spot of which he speaks was level or mountainous, high or low. The epithet must have been chosen by him of set and deliberate purpose to distinguish the place of which he speaks, and he

certainly could not distinguish the place from the scene of St. Matthew's Sermon more clearly by any epithet than by that which he has used. Nothing can be more different from a 'mountain' than a 'plain.'

These external marks of difference are accompanied by very many and very important internal differences in the two Sermons. As to these it will be sufficient here to refer to what is said in the Preface pp. l., li. (and especially the note at the latter page), and also to the Essay on the Parables below (p. 328, seq.).

Lastly, the same conclusion as to the distinctness of the two Sermons is the only opinion which will seem natural to those who are accustomed to think very highly of the accuracy with which our Lord's words are reported to us by the Evangelists. It will also commend itself to those who take it as a matter of course that our Lord must very often have delivered the same discourse more than once, and that on many other occasions He did not quite do this, but altered or modified what He had said to one audience or under one set of circumstances in order to suit the needs of another audience under other circumstances.

In truth, it is very important, as has been urged above, that we should at least understand all that is involved in the choice between these two opinions. If we suppose that the two Evangelists relate one and the same Sermon, delivered on one and the same occasion, we must then suppose, not only that all that is said by one and omitted by the other was actually said at one and the same time, and that, as far as the substance of our Lord's discourse is concerned, it is only adequately represented by a conjunction of the two, but also that the difference between the two accounts is to be set down simply and entirely to the reporter in each case. In this supposition we are certainly at a long distance from an accurate and adequate report of our Lord's words. Either the authors of the documents on which the Gospels are founded or the Evangelists themselves must have felt themselves at liberty to modify very considerably the words of our Lord on the one occasion to which they refer, if this hypothesis of the identity of the



Sermons be true. Now it is not to be denied that in many cases the Evangelists omit words and actions of our Lord which they might have recorded, because they wrote for a particular Church, whether a Jewish or a Gentile. We have a great many instances of this in St. Mark, who wrote for the Roman Church, in which there was at all events a large infusion of Gentiles, and the Jewish portion of which may very well have been acquainted with the Gospel of St. Matthew. We have also a great many instances of this in St. Luke. But the 'Sermon on the Plain' will appear to us quite different under the two different aspects which are in accordance with the two theories which are before us. In the one case, if it be the same with the Sermon on the Mount, it is St. Luke's representation of that Sermon as it is adapted by him or by the earlier authority, whoever it may have been, from whom he derived it, to Gentile converts or readers. In the other case, if it be a distinct sermon from the Sermon on the Mount, it is a faithful report of our Lord's own adaptation of the substance of parts of the Sermon on the Mount to a different audience from that to which the former sermon was delivered, at a later period than that Sermon, and under different circumstances. It is clear which of these two suppositions is the easiest, when the internal evidence of the respective discourses is weighed. There are, no doubt, many things in the Sermon on the Mount, the omission of which in the second Sermon can be very naturally explained by the consideration of the audience to which St. Matthew and St. Luke respectively addressed themselves. But there are also many differences which cannot be explained in that way, such as the great variation in the Beatitudes, the addition of the woes, the omission of many points which would have been as valuable for Gentile Christians as for Jewish converts. There can also be no doubt as to which of the two theories brings us nearer to our Lord Himself. In the one He spoke but once, and the differences which distinguish the Sermons come from the Evangelists. In the other He spoke twice, and in each case we have an accurate report of what He said, the variations

being made by Himself. For this reason, as also on account of the evidence external to the Sermons themselves, it seems more reverential both to our Lord and to the Evangelists not to confound the two Sermons.

2. *The healing of the Centurion's Servant* (§ 50. St. Matt. viii. 5—13 ; St. Luke vii. 1—10).

At first sight there seem to be many discrepancies between the account of this miracle as given by St. Matthew and the account of the same given by St. Luke. It is what may be called a crucial instance of the unreal differences which may apparently be found between the two Evangelists as regards our Lord's actions, just as the case of the two Sermons—that on the Mount and that on the Plain—is a crucial instance of the real differences which may be found in their reports of our Lord's words, when they appear to be so much alike as well as so different. If the differences in this case were of the same character as those of which we have spoken as to the Sermon on the Plain, we should be obliged to conclude that there were two centurions in Capharnaum whose servants were healed by our Lord.

The external circumstances of the story are the same in each case. There is no difference as to place or connection. The prayer of the Centurion, the action of our Lord in consequence, the words of the Centurion about being a man under authority, the *Domine non sum dignus*, our Lord's words about not having found such faith in Israel, and the miracle at the end, are all exactly the same, and the whole incident is such as in the nature of things would not be at all ordinary. Our Lord had very little indeed to do with heathen centurions, and there could not have been many of them living in a town like Capharnaum. All these things are a strong argument against the distinctness of the two occasions—just as strong as the external and internal arguments against the identity of the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain. Let us now see what may be adduced on the other side of the argument, remembering that we are here dealing with St. Matthew and St. Luke, that is, with an Evangelist who is extremely concise on the one hand, and,

on the other, with an Evangelist who loves to supplement and fill up and draw out the details where one of his predecessors has been summary.

St. Matthew tells us that the Centurion came to our Lord, telling Him that his servant was lying ill in his house of the palsy, and was in great torment. He adds that our Lord said He would come and heal him. St. Luke's account is that the Centurion heard of our Lord, and sent the elders of the Jews to Him, who recommended him strongly as a man worthy of such a favour as that which was asked, because he loved the nation and had built the synagogue. St. Luke mentions no words of our Lord in answer, but says that our Lord set out with them towards the Centurion's house.

In the same way St. Matthew says that the Centurion answered our Lord's proposal to come and heal the servant by the celebrated words, 'Lord, I am not worthy,' and the rest. St. Luke tells us that when our Lord came near the house, the Centurion, who must have been aware of His approach, sent some friends to meet him, and that the message which they took was in the same words as those which St. Matthew puts in the mouth of the Centurion himself. The words of our Lord to those who were following Him, about the faith of the Centurion, 'such as He had not found in Israel,' are the same in each Evangelist. But St. Matthew adds some words, which St. Luke omits, about the many who are to come from the East and the West, and sit down with the patriarchs in the kingdom of heaven, while the children of the kingdom are to be cast out into the exterior darkness. In St. Matthew, our Lord bids the Centurion go, 'and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee'—and the servant is healed at once. In St. Luke, the friends return after our Lord's remark, and find the sick man well. These are the differences in the two accounts. If they are such as to make these accounts incompatible, we must suppose two incidents. If they do not do so, we need not hesitate to consider that both Evangelists are telling the same story, or, as is their wont, different parts of the same story.

If we go by the rule of accepting all the positive state-

ments made by any Evangelist, the whole history becomes very simple, but it is complete in neither of the two versions before us. We have only to suppose, what is perfectly natural under the circumstances, that the Centurion first sent to our Lord and then came himself, finding that our Lord was on His way to his house, and that he said to our Lord, when he met Him, what he had already sent as a message by his friends. This is so absolutely and simply natural, and at the same time, if we may say so, so naïve and picturesque, as to commend itself to us as the true solution. The history, then, is as follows. The Centurion asks the elders of the Jews to intercede for him, and they go to our Lord and speak of his worth. 'He loveth our nation, and hath built us the synagogue.' No doubt there was some fear lest our Lord should reject the application on the ground that the man was a heathen. But our Lord at once sets out. It gets known to the Centurion that He was coming—the distance may have been very short, and the whole affair may have happened in a few minutes—and then he sends his friends with the message that he was not worthy, let not our Lord trouble Himself, he knew that He had only to speak the word, and the like. Here we seem to touch the fruit of that former miracle on the nobleman's son in the same city, on occasion of which our Lord had insisted, as it were, on faith in His power to heal at a distance. The 'speak the word only' of the Centurion, is the answer of faith to our Lord's words then—'Unless you see signs and wonders, you do not believe.' Then our Lord makes the remark about faith greater than any He had found in Israel. He lets the messengers go back, and when they arrive they find the servant healed; but in the mean time, as our Lord still walked on, the Centurion himself runs out to meet Him, tells Him of the illness of his servant, receives our Lord's assurance that He will come and heal him, and then the words, to which we may give the general title of the *Domine non sum dignus*, and which are repeated a thousand times daily in the holy Mass all over the world, are said again, and our Lord again speaks of the greatness of the man's faith, adding what He had not before added, the prophecy about the many who



would come from the east and the west, and sit down with the patriarchs in the kingdom of heaven. Then our Lord finally dismissed the Centurion, with the usual words, 'Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it unto thee.'

This is the simplest and plainest way of explaining the two accounts. There is another, which consists in regarding St. Matthew's words as compendious and summary—almost, as has been said before, as notes rather than a narrative. It cannot be denied that this theory is quite in harmony with St. Matthew's manner. It would not be critical, after a careful study of his Gospel, to assert that, when he says, 'A Centurion came unto Him, beseeching Him, and saying,' &c., he might not have meant to include the mission of the elders of the Jews and of his friends. It is clear, even from St. Matthew's narrative, that all that he relates did not take place in one spot, as he says that our Lord spoke to those who were following Him. This latter touch seems to confirm the first theory as to the explanation of the apparent differences.

3. *On the anointing of our Lord mentioned by St. Luke* (§ 55. St. Luke vii. 36—50).

The controversy which has been carried on as to the identity of this anointing of our Lord with that which is mentioned by the three other Evangelists as having taken place at the Supper at Bethany on the evening before Palm Sunday, need hardly be referred to here. Nothing can show better the extreme lengths to which some writers may be led by the desire to make the Evangelists speak of the same occasions when they relate similar actions. All true principles of Harmony would have to be abandoned, if we were obliged to believe that the action and occasion spoken of here were the same action and the same occasion as those mentioned at so much later a period by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. John.

The distinction between the two unctions having been assumed, it remains to say a few words as to the person to whom the action is attributed in each case. Here there are three persons mentioned, or two, or one. There is in



the first instance the woman in the text of St. Luke, whom we may speak of as the sinner. In the second place there is Mary Magdalene, who, under her full name, is not connected with either of the two unctions by any of the Evangelists. Thirdly, there is Mary the sister of Lazarus, who is named by St. John in two places as having anointed our Lord. The first place is in his eleventh chapter, where, when he introduces the history of Lazarus, he tells us that Mary his sister was the person who anointed our Lord and wiped His feet with her hair. This is before the second unction, which took place at the supper at Bethany. The second place is in his account of that supper, when he tells us, speaking of the family of Lazarus, that Mary took the pound of ointment and anointed our Lord. Thus, as far as these texts go—except for the feature in one of them of which we shall speak presently—we might suppose that the ‘sinner’ was the first to anoint our Lord, Mary the sister of Lazarus the second, and that Mary Magdalene had nothing to do with the unctions. Or we may suppose, if we choose, that the ‘sinner’ and Mary the sister of Lazarus are the same person, but distinct from the Magdalene; or again, that Magdalene is the ‘sinner,’ and Mary the sister of Lazarus another person; or again, that the ‘sinner’ and the sister of Lazarus and Mary Magdalene are the same person. This is the received tradition and opinion of the Church, although, as is only natural, there are to be found authorities and traditions which do not agree with this opinion.

The identity of the ‘sinner’ with Mary Magdalene seems to us almost too recognized a fact to be doubted, and it is confirmed by the statement made as to St. Mary Magdalene, both by St. Luke, in this place, and by St. Mark in his account of the Resurrection,<sup>1</sup> that our Lord had cast seven devils out of her. She had therefore been a ‘possessed’ person, and it is quite likely that such a person would have been a sinner, though we are not told in what kind or measure her sins had been. But this identification of the blessed Magdalene with the ‘sinner’ here mentioned is open

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark xvi. 9.

to some plausible difficulties, and cannot be said to be directly proved by any passage in the Gospels. The identification of the 'sinner' with Mary the sister of Lazarus is far more easy. It rests, in the first place, on the direct statement of St. John, who, when he first mentions the sister of Lazarus, speaks of her as the person who anointed our Lord. As this passage of St. John refers to a time before the second unction, it is natural to understand that the Evangelist means us to understand him as saying that the Mary of whom he now speaks is the person who had anointed our Lord some time before, that is, at the first unction. It may be added that no reason can be assigned for this statement of St. John's, unless it be understood in this way. He was going to mention the second unction, and it would be altogether out of character with his usual manner to speak by anticipation of the person who was to perform it as having performed it. If he meant to identify Mary with the 'sinner' of St. Luke, the passage is intelligible. Again, he would not have spoken of her as ἡ ἀλείψασα, if the action was still future, but as the person who 'was to' anoint our Lord, as he speaks of Judas as the Apostle who was to betray Him. In that place (c. vi. 71), as in another (c. vii. 29), where St. John speaks of what was future at the time of the incidents of which he is writing, but past at the time when he wrote, he uses the auxiliary verb μέλλειν instead of the aorist of the other verb. These reasons make it certainly difficult not to suppose that Mary the sister of Lazarus was the 'sinner.' The action is one which belongs, as it were, to one person, who might repeat it on an occasion like that of the supper, when she had so much fresh reason for love and gratitude towards our Lord, and when, moreover, she may well have had some foreboding of His approaching death. To imitate the action of another person would not be so natural, and to have done so would not have been enough to secure for the Mary of whom we are speaking the epithet which St. John gives her as 'the Anointer of our Lord.'

The only point, as has been said, at which the argument for the identification of the 'sinner' and the sister of Lazarus

with St. Mary Magdalene fails to be absolutely demonstrative, is that the name Magdalene is never given to either in the passages in which either is certainly spoken of. At the same time, it may fairly be argued that this silence is easily explained, and, indeed, that the whole narrative taken together almost if not entirely supplies the absence of the identification by name. The only Evangelist who names Mary the sister of Lazarus as the anointer at Bethany is St. John. If we are asked why he does not call her the Magdalene, and why, on the other hand, he uses the epithet Magdalene when he speaks of the women at the foot of the Cross and when he relates the history of the Resurrection, the answer is at hand. In these two places<sup>2</sup> where he mentions Mary Magdalene, there are other Mariæ, either mentioned by himself, or present to his mind, from whom she was to be distinguished. It is not so in the narrative of the supper at Bethany. It seems to be St. John's way to call her Mary, simply, when he can, and only to use the other name, Magdalene, when he is obliged for the sake of distinctness. And in the second place, the history of the supper at Bethany itself is enough to identify Mary the sister of Lazarus with the Mary Magdalene of the Resurrection. For our Lord speaks of the anointing which was then performed as a part of His funeral rites, and bids the disciples let Mary keep what she has done for His burial. These words seem to imply that the Mary of whom our Lord spoke would certainly be foremost in the endeavours of the holy women His followers to anoint and embalm His Sacred Body, but that she would not be able then to do what she had done at Bethany. It is almost impossible to suppose that this Mary would either have been absent at such a time, or that her presence would not have been noted. But nothing is said in the history of the Resurrection of Mary the sister of Lazarus, unless she be the same person as Mary Magdalene. If she is the same person, then our Lord's words at the supper are easily understood, and the whole history of this devout lover of His becomes complete.

A great many more arguments of a less direct kind have

<sup>2</sup> St. John xix. 25 ; xx. 1—18.

been adduced for this opinion, which is that which the Church follows in her offices for the feast of St. Mary Magdalene.

We may further remove one possible cause of difficulty. St. Luke in the account of the sinner whose unction is the subject of his narrative, gives her no name. But almost immediately after this<sup>3</sup> he speaks of a number of women who followed our Lord in His missionary circuit, and among these women he names Mary Magdalene. It seems strange that when he thus names her, he should make no reference to the scene which he has just described.

The answer to this difficulty is twofold. In the first place, it is fair to suppose that St. Luke would leave out the name of St. Mary Magdalene in the first scene out of respect to her, because he there speaks of a woman who was a well-known 'sinner.' But he would name her when he came to speak of the holy women who attended on our Lord. In the second place, it is very probable that we have here an instance of the junction of two separate pieces in what we may call St. Luke's collection. The fragment, so to speak, about the sinner belongs to one distinct section of the work, and the fragment about the holy women to another. And this may account for the absence in the text of any reference to the preceding anecdote.

The other difficulties which have been raised against the identity of St. Mary Magdalene and the 'sinner' in this passage, from the alleged improbability that our Lord would allow such a person, as this woman is often supposed to have been, to minister to Him, and to go about after Him in the company of the holy women, need not be dwelt upon here. They are in the main only echoes of the speech of the Pharisee about her, as reported by St. Luke. At all events they will be best dealt with when the time comes for a full discussion of all that is here related concerning her.

4. *Our Blessed Lady and our Lord's 'Brethren' desiring to see Him* (§ 57. St. Matt. xii. 46—50; St. Mark iii. 31—35; St. Luke viii. 19—21).

This anecdote is placed in a somewhat different connec-

<sup>3</sup> St. Luke viii. 2.



tion by the three Evangelists who relate it. In St. Matthew it comes after the answer of our Lord to the Scribes and Pharisees who sought a sign. In St. Mark it comes immediately after our Lord's words about the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, but, as this Evangelist has omitted what St. Matthew relates about the seeking a sign, it may be said that he places the anecdote at least in the same connection as St. Matthew—for the words about the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost immediately precede, in St. Matthew, the incident of the seeking a sign. St. Luke puts it a little later, after the explanation of the parable of the Sower, and the words of our Lord as to carefulness in hearing the Word of God.

This question is to some extent mixed up with another of greater importance and difficulty, which will have to be discussed in reference to the next division of our Lord's Public Life, whether the instance which St. Luke gives some time later than this, of a miracle very similar to that which occasioned, as St. Matthew relates, the charge against our Lord of casting out devils through Beelzebub, and of a similar charge, also given later on by St. Luke, is to be identified with this instance in St. Matthew. But we may here assume that the two occasions are distinct, and confine ourselves to the explanation of the difference between the order of St. Matthew and St. Mark on the one hand, and of St. Luke on the other. The only Evangelist who gives a distinct note of connection with what has preceded this anecdote of our Lord's Mother and 'brethren' is St. Matthew, and he says that it happened 'while He was still speaking to the multitude.' It may be said, perhaps, that this is no true note of connection, because the anecdote itself requires that our Lord should have been engaged in teaching, and thus the words may only mean that once, when He was speaking to the crowd, an attempt was made to interrupt Him on occasion of the coming of His Mother and His 'brethren.' Still the word 'yet' seems to indicate a connection with what immediately precedes this anecdote in St. Matthew. As St. Mark has left out what St. Matthew puts immediately before it, there is no distinct connection



with the context in his Gospel. It is also remarkable that St. Luke, who also gives no distinct particle of connection, puts it in a different context from St. Matthew. For, at the time at which St. Luke has placed the anecdote our Lord was not speaking to the multitudes, but to the disciples in private. If, therefore, the order in St. Luke were to be considered as meant to signify a connection of place and time, we might have to suppose—as has been supposed by some Harmonists—that this was an incident which took place on two separate occasions—once when our Lord was teaching the multitude, and, again, when He was speaking in private to His disciples. But we have here an illustration of the method of St. Luke which deserves great attention. He is indeed very studious of the chronological order, but he does not mind deserting it sometimes for the sake of the order of ideas. He has done this, unless we are mistaken, in a place in his Gospel no less important than the account of the Last Supper. The anecdote in question seems to have taken place in the connection in which St. Matthew has placed it, because if it had happened after the instruction which it follows in St. Luke, St. Mark would probably have followed the same order as St. Luke, whereas he has placed it where St. Matthew has placed it. It comes in very beautifully in its place in both the earlier Evangelists, because the central and prominent truth which it expresses is the close union between our Lord and those who do the will of His Father, and this truth is in contrast, such as St. Matthew has already drawn a little before, with the other about the reprobation which falls on those who resist the light and speak against the Holy Spirit of God. Now St. Luke has been obliged to omit what St. Matthew and St. Mark have related in the passage which, in their Gospels, precedes this anecdote, because it belongs to his plan to insert at a later place a very similar passage—which belongs to the Judæan Ministry of our Lord and not to the Galilæan. But he does not wish also to omit this anecdote, because it belongs, in truth, to this period, and not to the later. So he finds for it a place as near the time it happened as possible—and the anecdote is in truth

sufficiently detached to be put in one place as well as in another within the same period. He places it at another point of the history which suits it almost equally well with that to which it belongs. For the last words in the instruction which preceded the anecdote in St. Luke<sup>4</sup> relate to the blessings of careful hearers and the danger of careless reception of Divine truth, and the instruction itself follows immediately on the explanation of the parable of the Sower. And here also St. Luke adds a word or two, which St. Matthew and St. Mark had left out, for he mentions that our Lord said, 'My Mother and My brethren are they who *hear the word of God* and keep it.'

It may perhaps be as well to add here a few words as to the persons who in this and other passages in the Gospels are called our Lord's Brethren. It is certainly quite superfluous to explain to Catholics that they cannot have been His brothers in the common and full sense of the term. It so happens that a simple inspection of the statements of the New Testament concerning them is enough to place this beyond a doubt to any fair mind. The Helvidian or even the Ebionite ideas on the subject, which find favour with Protestant critics, can only do so because any idea that tends to lower our Blessed Lady, and, through her, our Lord Himself, presents itself to their minds as something to be instinctively caught at. The New Testament statements, when taken all together, are so clearly against such notions, that it requires the assistance of prejudice to set them aside. It will be enough, therefore, to enumerate these statements, and draw from them the simple conclusion which enables us to see who the 'Brethren' of our Lord were.

The places in which the 'Brethren of our Lord' are mentioned are these—

St. Matt. xiii. 54—56 ; St. Mark vi. 2, 3. The townsfolk of Nazareth say, 'Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His Mother called Mary? and His brethren, James and Joses and Simon and Judas? and His sisters, are they not all with us?'

St. Matt. xii. 46—50 ; St. Mark iii. 31—35 ; St. Luke viii.

<sup>4</sup> St. Luke viii. 16.

19—21. Our Lord's 'Mother and Brethren' desire to see Him.

St. John ii. 12. Our Lord goes to Capharnaum with His Mother and Brethren.

St. John vii. 3—10. Our Lord's Brethren urge Him to show Himself to the world. St. John says they did not believe in Him.

Acts i. 12—14. Our Lord's Brethren are mentioned with our Blessed Lady and the holy women as joining the Apostles in prayer.

I Cor. ix. 5. St. Paul mentions 'the Brethren of our Lord and Cephas' as persons of high authority in the Church.

Gal. i. 19. He says 'other of the Apostles I saw none, save James the brother of the Lord.'

St. Jude 1. 'Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.'

Acts xv. 13. St. James proposes the decree of the Council at Jerusalem.

Gal. ii. 9. 'James, and Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars.'

Thus we have four 'brothers,' James, Joses, or Joseph, Simon, and Jude. One of them, James, is mentioned as an Apostle by St. Paul, and another of the Apostles, Jude, speaks of himself as the brother of James.

Besides these statements, we have the following as to their mother—

'Mary the mother of James and Joses' (St. Matt. xxvii. 56; St. Mark xv. 40).

'Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses' (St. Matt. xxvii. 56; St. Mark xv. 40).

'Mary the mother of James' (St. Mark xvi. 1; St. Luke xxiv. 10).

'Mary the mother of Joses' (St. Mark xv. 47).

All these places refer to the same person, who stood by the Cross with our Lady and St. Mary Magdalene, and is spoken of in the accounts of the Resurrection as 'the other Mary,' *i.e.*, other than Mary Magdalene. St. John calls her the 'sister' of our Blessed Lady, and Mary of Cleophas (*i.e.*, his wife or daughter). Now the 'James' mentioned by

St. Paul and in the Acts cannot be James the son of Zebedee, who was the first Apostle to be martyred. But this James was also an Apostle. He must therefore have been James the son of Alphæus—which is the same name as Cleophas. St. Jude is his brother, and is called in two catalogues of the Apostles Thaddæus and Lebbæus, probably because the name of Judas was avoided because it was the name of the traitor.

Thus, of the four 'brethren' who are attributed to our Lord by the Nazarenes in the Gospel, we find James, Joses, and Judas directly stated to be the children of Mary the wife of Alphæus, or of Alphæus himself, and Simon or Symeon put in close connection with them. He is never called the son of Mary, and may perhaps have been the son of Cleophas by a former wife, or the son of some other person who was a relative of our Blessed Lady or St. Joseph. The same may perhaps have been the case with St. Jude, who, as well as Simon and James, was an Apostle. The other brother, Joses, is thought by some to have been the same who was surnamed Barsabas, and who is mentioned as one proposed for the Apostolate when St. Matthias was elected. The history of St. James is particularly interesting, as he filled a very important place in the early Church ; but it belongs more properly to a volume on the Acts of the Apostles. The difficulty about our Lord's 'brethren' who did not believe in Him, as St. John says, speaking of the time before the last Feast of Tabernacles, is easily explained. St. John uses the words 'believe in Him' in a very strong sense, implying a full belief in our Lord's Divinity. Moreover, as these 'brethren' were in truth our Lord's cousins—only two of them, perhaps, really cousins in our sense of the term, as Simon and Jude may have been children of Cleophas by a former wife, not by Mary, the sister (or cousin) of our Lady—there may have been many more whose names are not preserved to us who may have stood in the same relationship to Him and to His Blessed Mother, who may have been called by the same general name. The word 'brethren' really means no more than our word 'kinsfolk.'



5. *The Demoniacs in the land of the Gerasenes* (§ 64. St. Matt. viii. 28—34 ; St. Mark v. 1—21 ; St. Luke viii. 26—40).

The difference between the Evangelists, as it appears, is here that St. Matthew says they were two, whereas St. Mark and St. Luke speak only of one. There is no other difficulty of any moment. St. Matthew's account is very summary, as usual, and that of the others far more developed. The truth seems to be, that there were two demoniacs, as St. Matthew says, but that one of them was far more savage and terrible than the other. This is the one of whom St. Mark and St. Luke speak, and with good reason, as they go on to relate how after he had been delivered, he begged our Lord to allow him to follow Him. Our Lord, however, sent him to his home. All this personal history is omitted by St. Matthew, and so he mentions the two, to one of whom it did not apply.

6. *On Herod's hearing of our Lord after the death of St. John Baptist* (§ 71. St. Matt. xiv. 1 ; St. Mark vi. 12 ; St. Luke ix. 7).

We notice this passage, not as a difficulty in the Harmony, but as the possible occasion of a difficulty as to the relation between our Lord's history and that of St. John. It seems probable that St. John was put to death before the mission of the Apostles by our Lord ; and some perplexity may perhaps be occasioned by the statements of the Evangelists as to the cause of our Lord's retirement into the desert.<sup>5</sup> The first Evangelist, immediately after the narrative of the death of St. John, adds, 'When Jesus heard this, He departed thence in a ship,' &c. It must be remembered that the story of St. John's martyrdom is inserted by way of parenthesis, out of its place chronologically. What our Lord heard before He retired was not the death of St. John, but that Herod had heard of Himself, and was saying 'this is John the Baptist risen from the dead.' This was at the same time with the return of the Apostles from their mission,

<sup>5</sup> St. Matt. xiv. 13 ; St. Mark vi. 31 ; St. Luke ix. 10.



which mission was probably the cause of the great spread of our Lord's fame which reached the ears of Herod. Indeed, it may very well have been the case, that it was on account of some alarm as to the possible interference of Herod that the Apostles returned. Then our Lord took occasion to make them come into a 'desert place,' that they might have some rest. Although He soon returned to Capharnaum, after the first miracle of the loaves, which took place at this time, He did not remain there, and His course became very much of a flight from observation for some weeks or more.

## APPENDIX.

### *On the Theology of the Parables.*

FEW things are more definitely marked off by the sacred historians of the life of our Blessed Lord than the beginning of His teaching by means of parables. It was something which the Apostles did not expect, and as to which they questioned Him at the time. He gave them a distinct and precise answer as to His reason for adopting a new practice in His teaching, which answer has been recorded for our guidance. From this answer, and from an examination of the parables themselves, we may expect to obtain a clue as to any particular characteristics of the teaching in question which furnished the motive for the change of method adopted by our Lord. And we may, at the same time, be able to settle the question which naturally arises concerning the parables—the question, namely, whether they form a distinct body of teaching with reference to a particular subject, or whether the difference between them and the rest of our Lord's instructions was simply one of form.

With regard to this last question, it is pertinent to observe that the parabolic form of teaching was not now used by our Blessed Lord for the first time, unless we are disposed to insist very strictly upon characteristics which may seem almost technical, such as some direct declaration of our Lord that He taught by comparison. When our Blessed Lord said to Simon the Pharisee, as St. Mary Magdalene was kneeling at His feet, 'A certain man had two debtors; one owed him five hundred pence and the other fifty, and when

they had nothing to pay he forgave them both,<sup>1</sup> it can hardly be questioned that He spoke a parable in the common sense of the word, as much as when He said to the priests and scribes at Jerusalem—‘What think you? A certain man had two sons, and going to the first he said, Son, go to-day and work in my vineyard. And he answered, I will not, and afterwards repented and went. And going to the other he said likewise. And he answered, I go, sir, and went not.’<sup>2</sup> The two passages are almost exactly parallel, each terminating in a question put by our Lord to the person or persons whom He wished to instruct. But the first case took place before the teaching by parables began, and the last case occurred at the very end of our Lord’s Ministry. In the earlier teaching of our Lord, we find, from the very beginning, that use of images and similitudes which is the foundation of the parabolic system. There are certain passages which we may almost speak of as formal parables, such as the words about the land already white unto harvest, the sower and reaper being different and yet rejoicing together, addressed to the disciples after our Lord’s conversation with the woman at the well of Samaria,<sup>3</sup> and more than one part of the Sermons on the Mount and on the Plain, such as the address to the disciples as the salt of the earth and the light of the world, the images of the father giving his children bread and fish rather than stones or serpents, of the wolves in sheep’s clothing, of the beam and mote in the eye, of the blind leading the blind, of the trees known by their fruit, and the almost direct parable at the end of each of these two sermons of the man who built his house on the rock and the other man who built his house upon the sand.<sup>4</sup>

Passing on a little further in the Gospels, we have the image of the house divided against itself, and of the strong

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke vii. 40, seq.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matt. xxi. 28—32; § 135.

<sup>3</sup> St. John iv. 35.

<sup>4</sup> St. Matt. v. vi. vii. 24—27; St. Luke vi. 20—49; §§ 31—36, 47—46.

armed man whose goods are made spoil of by a stronger than he.<sup>5</sup> All these passages are placed at an earlier stage of our Lord's Ministry than the formal commencement of His teaching by parables, and they make it appear improbable that the great difference between our Lord's teaching as addressed to the people before and after that commencement is to be found simply, or even principally, in the form which it assumed in its several stages respectively. If a modern teacher, who had up to a certain time been accustomed to direct dogmatic or moral instruction, were suddenly to change his method of procedure, and teach only by fable or allegory what he had before taught in another way, the difference would be described as consisting mainly in the form. If a teacher, who had before very frequently used familiar images and similitudes, or even anecdotes, to inculcate moral truths, were to abandon any other method and throw his similitudes more strictly into the form of parables, such a change might perhaps arrest attention and cause inquiry, but it would hardly claim the great importance which appears to be attached to the change made by our Lord in the present instance.

We are thus prepared for a further inquiry into the answers given by our Blessed Lord to the questions of the Apostles, and into the parables themselves, as far as these may shed light upon the precise nature of this new phase in our Lord's teaching. Our Lord's answer to the question, 'Why dost Thou speak unto them in parables?' is placed by St. Matthew immediately after the first parable, that of the Sower and the Seed.<sup>6</sup> It contains much that is repeated by St. Mark (iv. 10) when he gives the explanation of that first parable, in answer to a question as to its meaning which must not be confounded with the more general question as to the reasons for the parabolic teaching as such. Leaving

<sup>5</sup> St. Matt. xii. ; St. Mark iii. ; § 56.

<sup>6</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 10, seq. ; § 59.

aside some apparent difficulties of interpretation, with which it is not at present our business to deal, we may state the answer much in this way—‘To those to whom I thus speak it is not given, as it is given to you, to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. For he that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall abound ; but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away that which he hath.’ The mystery of the kingdom of God, therefore, is the subject of the parables, and it is in some sense an advance upon and an addition to the knowledge already possessed by the Apostles. ‘I speak to them in parables,’ our Blessed Lord continues, ‘because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaias, who saith : With the hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is grown gross, and with their ears they have been dull of hearing, and their eyes they have shut, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.’ This is the reason given by our Lord for His speaking to the multitude in parables. Their hearts are too hard for the mystery of God’s kingdom. He is acting on His own precept, given in the Sermon on the Mount, about not casting pearls before swine, ‘lest perhaps they trample them under their feet, and turning upon you they tear you.’<sup>7</sup>

But, on the other hand, the parables contained, to those who could understand them, something exceedingly precious. They were, to use the heathen poet’s words, full of speech to those who could understand them, and the doctrine which they contained was enshrined in them in that particular form, in order that ‘to him that hath’ more ‘might be given.’ Thus our Lord continues to His Apostles—‘Blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears because they hear.

<sup>7</sup> St. Matt. vii. 6.



For, amen, I say to you, many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them.' And we find Him showing a kind of tender anxiety for them, lest they should not profit sufficiently by this teaching of 'the mystery of the kingdom of God.' Thus, before expounding the parable of the Seed, He says, 'Are you ignorant of this parable? and how shall you know all parables?'<sup>8</sup> as if they were to contain a body of instruction given in a definite number of comparisons. And again, after the explanation, 'Take heed what you hear. In what measure you shall mete it shall be measured unto you again, and more shall be given you. For he that hath to him shall be given, and he that hath not that also which he hath shall be taken away from him.'<sup>9</sup> All these passages seem to prepare us for the conclusion that the parables do not differ merely in form from other instructions of our Lord to the people, such as the Sermon on the Mount, and, in part, the Sermon on the Plain, but that there may be some general subject more particularly set forth in them, to be instructed concerning which was a great and high privilege, of which careless persons were not worthy, and of which the full revelation had hitherto been reserved by God's Providence. It might seem, also, that this knowledge was especially required for those who, like the Apostles, were not only to be the subjects of the new kingdom, but also its ministers and propagators. After the first series of parables, He turned to them and asked, 'Have ye understood all these things? They say to Him, yes. He said unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like to a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old.'<sup>10</sup>

What, then, is this head or subject of Divine teaching and

<sup>8</sup> St. Mark iv. 13.

<sup>9</sup> St. Mark iv. 24, 25.

<sup>10</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 51, 52.

knowledge which is set forth so specially in the parables, if we are to consider them as differing from former teaching of our Lord not only in form, but, to a certain extent, in subject and scope? If we consider the moral or practical truths which are undoubtedly conveyed in the parables, we may well be disposed to class them under different heads, and to find a great variety of subjects treated of in them. A recent author, whose work,<sup>11</sup> though cast in a very simple and popular form, shows much study and thoughtfulness, has thus classed the parables under four heads ;—1. Parables concerning the Church. 2. Parables concerning God's dealings with us. 3. Parables concerning our conduct to God. 4. Parables concerning our conduct to other men. Such divisions are of much practical use ; but they are to a great extent arbitrary. In the work to which we allude for instance, the parables of the Friend at Midnight and the Unjust Judge fall under the third head—parables concerning our conduct to God ; and that of the Good Samaritan under the head of our conduct to other men. But the two former are most certainly meant to encourage us to prayer by setting forth God's way of yielding to it under two images of successful importunity, and that of the Good Samaritan must with equal certainty be assigned to the class of those which set forth God's dealings with us in the work of our redemption after the Fall, and this charity of God to us is made the pattern of our charity to others. We need not discuss other methods of division which may have been suggested, and which have very often much practical usefulness to recommend them. A very interesting arrangement of the parables will be found in the last chapter (ch. xlii.) of Salmeron's volume of Commentary on them—the seventh volume of his great work. In this arrangement the parables are adapted to the Gospels for the several days of Lent, in order, from Ash Wednesday up to Easter Tuesday, and the adaptation

<sup>11</sup> *The New Testament Narrative, &c.* Burns and Oates, 1868.

will be found to suggest many striking reflections. It is, however, as an adaptation, not as a systematic arrangement that we mention it here.

We believe that it will be found easier to grasp the main idea of the parables as a whole, if we consider that they are meant to illustrate one great head of doctrine which is most naturally fitted for promulgation under this particular form. The parables differ, of course, from the other teaching of our Lord in their descriptive character, the lesson being left to be gathered from the truths involved in the description. And that which is the subject of description, that one great head to which the parables refer, is that which forms only one of the heads in the division lately mentioned—that is, God in His dealings with His creatures, and especially man. Before proceeding to the actual proof of this, with reference to the parables, we may say a few words on the degree to which, if we may be allowed the expression, the thought of the government of the world by God seems to have drawn to itself the tenderest devotion and most constant attention of the Sacred Heart of the Incarnate Son. ✓

It is said of Him in the very outset of the Gospel history, 'The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' Moses gave a rule of action, Jesus Christ brought grace to enable men to keep the law of God; but He brought not only grace, but truth, knowledge which had not been before given concerning His Father—'God no man hath ever seen, the only-begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.'<sup>12</sup> The English word 'declare' in its present sense, is but a poor substitute for the full meaning of the Greek, or of the Latin word by which the Vulgate has rendered the Greek. St. John seems to mean a full and perfect revelation, as far as such revelation is possible to our capacities. At the very end of His last

<sup>12</sup> St. John i. 18. The Greek word is ἐξηγήσατο. The Latin is *enarravit*.

most intimate discourse to His Apostles, our Lord spoke of the same subject as the great matter of His instructions. 'The hour cometh when I shall no longer speak to you in proverbs, but shall tell you openly of the Father.'<sup>13</sup> It is well known that St. John throughout uses the word which is rendered 'proverbs' in the same sense as the 'parables' of the other Evangelists. From the first recorded words of our Lord down to the last, from the speech to our Blessed Lady in the Temple, 'How is it that ye sought Me, did ye not know that I must be about My Father's business?' to the cry on the Cross in which He breathed out His Soul, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit,' we can find very few utterances of our Lord which do not directly or indirectly refer to His Father. The particular subject of which we are speaking—that is the Providential dealings of God with men and with His creatures—is characteristically prominent in the earlier teaching of our Lord. To some extent it was less directly mentioned as time went on and as opposition grew.

We may illustrate what we mean by a comparison of the two great discourses, the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain. They were delivered, perhaps, at no very great interval of time. The choice of the twelve Apostles which was immediately followed by the delivery of the second sermon, may probably have taken place about the Pentecost after the second Passover of our Lord's Ministry; and the Sermon on the Mount, the first of the two, may have been delivered late in the first year. But between the two had sprung up the first formal and organized opposition to our Lord on the part of the Jewish authorities, first at Jerusalem, and afterwards in Galilee, on account of what they deemed His laxity about the Sabbath-day, on which day He had healed the impotent man at the Pool, defended the disciples for plucking the ears of corn, and worked a second miracle—probably after His return from Jerusalem

<sup>13</sup> St. John xvi. 25.

to Galilee—on the man with the withered hand in the synagogue.<sup>14</sup> It was after this that our Lord began to withdraw Himself from His enemies, in a manner which St. Matthew has specially mentioned as one of the chain of fulfilments of prophecy to which he draws attention all through his Gospel.<sup>15</sup> We need not draw out the similarity or the differences which mark the two Sermons further than is useful for our present purpose ; but there is in the second a marked absence of that free loving mention of God as our Father which characterizes the Sermon on the Mount. Most of the Beatitudes are wanting in the later discourse ; as also the injunction to ‘let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.’ The very words ‘your Father’ occur only once in the Sermon on the Plain, and then in a passage parallel to a part of the Sermon on the Mount, in which the reference to God’s dealings is expanded by a twofold and beautiful illustration. In St. Luke it is only, ‘Love ye your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing thereby, and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the Highest, for He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil.’<sup>16</sup> In the Sermon on the Mount the image is far more definite. ‘I say to you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your Father Who is in heaven, Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust.’<sup>17</sup> In the part of the Sermon on the Mount which follows, the mention of ‘your Father in heaven’ meets us in almost every verse. Almsgiving is to

<sup>14</sup> St. John v. ; St. Matt. xii. 1—8 ; St. Mark ii. 23—28 ; St. Luke vi. 1—5 ; and St. Matt. xii. 9—14 ; St. Mark iii. 1—6 ; St. Luke vi. 6—11. §§ 41—44.

<sup>15</sup> St. Matt. xii. 17—19.

<sup>16</sup> St. Luke vi. 35.

<sup>17</sup> St. Matt. v. 44, 45.



be done in secret, that our Father Who seeth in secret may repay it. Prayer is to be made in secret, for the same reason. The 'Our Father' is given in full, but it is omitted in the Sermon on the Plain, and the petition about forgiveness is explained by reference to the rules by which our Father will be guided in dealing with us. Then follow precepts about fasting, the motive of which is the same reference to the Father. Then there are passages about not serving two masters, about absolute confidence in our Father, Who knoweth all our needs, Who feeds the birds of the air, and clothes the lilies of the field, and about expecting an answer to prayer, because our Father will certainly give good things to those who ask Him more readily than any earthly father to his own children. In fact, in mentioning the passages of this kind which are to be found in the first Sermon, and which are omitted in the second, we have gone a good way towards a perfect enumeration of the differences between the two discourses.<sup>18</sup> We are far from saying that no other reason than that which is here suggested occasioned these differences, for the audience to which the Sermon on the Plain was addressed, seems to have been made up of a mixed crowd, among whom there may even have been some heathen, and the Sermon on the Mount was delivered to those who were more nearly followers of our Lord. But we think that there is good reason for maintaining that the progress of

<sup>18</sup> We may add another illustration, which may at first sight seem to refer to a merely accidental difference. On the first occasion when our Lord cast the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, St. John tells us that He said to them who sold doves, 'Take these things away, and make not *the house of My Father* a house of traffic' (St. John ii. 16). On the second occasion, after Palm Sunday, and therefore at the end of His teaching, He is described by the other three Evangelists as saying more formally, 'It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves' (St. Matt. xxi. 13; St. Luke xix. 46). St. Mark's words are slightly different (xi. 17).

opposition had much to do with the more reserved character of our Lord's teaching at the later period of the two.

But after the Sermon on the Plain had been delivered, a further development of the malignant opposition to our Lord had taken place, very different in character from the captious objection made against Him from the letter of the law about the Sabbath-day. His enemies now took the line of attributing His miracles to a compact with Beelzebub; thus making themselves guilty of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and imputing to Satan that very providential agency of love and mercy which was designed by God to be the remedy for mankind through the Incarnation. We know our Lord's indignation at this charge, and the very strange language He used concerning it. It is from this time that we have to date His denunciations of that evil generation, of which the latter state was to be made worse than the first. And it is from this time also that we are to date the beginning to teach by parables.

There is certainly abundant ground for considering that our Blessed Lord, to speak of Him after a human manner, felt Himself full of knowledge concerning God and His ways with His creatures, which He burned to impart to those to whom He was sent, but which they were not fit to receive. At the outset of His history we have an account of His conversation with Nicodemus,<sup>19</sup> to whom He spoke about the necessity of a new birth in Baptism with a plainness and openness which are surprising to us when we compare them with many parts of His subsequent teaching. There is the same directness of instruction to be remarked in the conversation which follows, in St. John, between our Lord and the woman of Samaria. When He said to her about the Messias, 'I Who speak unto thee am He,'<sup>20</sup> He made a direct assertion which He made at no other time, except when adjured by Caiaphas to declare whether He were the

<sup>19</sup> St. John iii. 1, seq.

<sup>20</sup> St. John iv. 26.

Christ, the Son of the Blessed. But to Nicodemus He used words of complaint, as if He were surprised at the dulness of his perception of spiritual truth—‘Amen, amen, I say to thee, that we speak what we know and we testify what we have seen, and you receive not our testimony. I have spoken unto you earthly things, and you believe not, how will you believe if I shall speak unto you heavenly things?’<sup>21</sup> We need not draw out here the whole that might be said concerning this difficulty, which our Lord experienced almost universally, and to the very end of His Ministry, in meeting with hearts and minds capable of receiving His Divine doctrine. But these considerations prepare us to find that, when the time had come for Him to teach the people more fully about God, and especially about that great revelation of Himself which is contained in His Providence and in the arrangement of His kingdom, in the widest sense of that word, He found Himself constrained to adopt this particular mode of teaching more exclusively, by means of which the mystery of the kingdom might be enshrined in the most familiar form, a form which can hardly escape the memory after that faculty has once taken it in, and yet be so enshrined therein as not to be thrust upon the notice of those incapable of understanding it, while at the same time it invited the thoughtful pondering of those whose hearts were already to some extent enlightened concerning it. If we might be so bold as to compare what passed in our Lord’s Sacred Heart with what is noblest and best in the workings and productions of the most gifted of men—

Those whose hearts are beating high  
With the pulse of poesy—

we may venture to say that He was fain to pour forth, in some form analogous to the highest song, the thoughts to which the possession of all the knowledge concerning

<sup>21</sup> St. John iii. 11, 12.

God with which the Sacred Humanity was endowed gave birth. The knowledge thus given to Him, like the other graces and treasures which He received at the time of the Hypostatic Union, were given, not for Himself alone, but for us—for the children of the Church throughout all ages ; and we may consider those instructions of His, which the Providence of His Father had determined should come down to us in the Gospel narratives, as having been framed for us as well as for those to whom they were immediately addressed. The revelation of the Father, which it was His commission to make to mankind, was thus made independent of the unworthiness and dulness and hardness of heart of those by whom He happened to be immediately surrounded during so large a portion of His teaching. If we are to apply to the Sacred Heart the rule which our Lord Himself gave, and say that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, so that we may judge of His habitual thoughts by the subjects that are always upon His lips, we must certainly say that the character and perfections of the Father were ever His darling subjects of contemplation. When the heart that was most near and most like unto His own, the heart of His Blessed Mother, poured itself out in her holy canticle of thanksgiving, it was a strain that spoke of one wonderful perfection of God after another—His Lordship, His Providence in Redemption, His Condescension to the humble, His Power, His Sanctity, His Mercy, His Faithfulness in His promises, and that law of His kingdom whereby the proud are confounded, the lowly exalted, the hungry filled, and the rich sent empty away. We cannot, then, be far wrong if we venture to approach the parables of our Lord with this thought in our minds—that they contain more, perhaps, than any other part of His teaching, His description of His Father in His dealings with those who belong to Him. Let us allow ourselves to suppose that to these applies, at least



as fully as to any other of His discourses, the text already quoted from St. John—‘The only-begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.’

We shall perhaps find that this view of the parables will bring their signification more into a harmonious whole than any other, and that, on the other hand, we hardly require a more complete system of teaching as to God and His Providence than that which is here contained. No doubt, a number of them refer immediately to the Church; but the Church is one great manifestation or fruit of God’s Fatherly Love, and the laws on which He has acted in respect to the Church have not been confined in their operation to what immediately concerns her. No doubt the far greater number of them, again, are meant to convey some distinct moral or practical lesson, such as the necessity of vigilance, or of Christian prudence, or the law of charity or of mutual forgiveness of injuries; but these lessons are pointed in the parables by distinct reference to something in God’s character or ways of dealing with us, which is the more immediate subject of the picture. And, perhaps, it may also be found—and this is the last argument for which there is room in the present paper—that this particular view of the general scope of the teaching by parables may explain some features in them which are otherwise the occasion of difficulties more or less serious. Nor would it materially interfere with this view as to the general purport of the teaching by parables, if we find that our Lord now and then used the same form with another object, such as we can hardly help seeing, for instance, in the parable of the Two Sons,<sup>22</sup> which He Himself explained as applying to the conduct of the priests and scribes on the one hand, and of the publicans and harlots on the other, with respect to the baptism of St. John. Nor, again, must it be urged against us that some of the

<sup>22</sup> St. Matt. xxi. 26—32.



parables, as that of the Labourers in the Vineyard, and the Unmerciful Servant, are undoubtedly addressed to the most intimate followers of our Lord. All these parables speak of great laws of God's kingdom—and this is the main point on which we insist.

When we consider Who God is, and how infinitely His attributes and nature are above our comprehension, it must be obvious at once that His government of the universe must be, as a whole and in its parts, very far above the ken of our mental faculties, though at the same time it is equally true that in nature and in Providence, as well as in the supernatural order, He distinctly reveals Himself, and intends us to learn about Him from His works and ways. He is the one great object of the study and contemplation of all created intelligent beings, and at the same time He must, as it were, break the knowledge of Himself to us tenderly, He must raise us on high and add fresh power to our eyes before we can gaze on Him. If we could fully understand Him and His ways, He would not be our God ; if we could know nothing about Him and about them, we should not be the creatures He has made us, and our life here would not be a preparation for the blessedness which He intends for us hereafter, and of which we even now enjoy the partial foretaste. The very first thing that we know about Him is a mystery to us, in the common sense of the word. For the first great mystery in the Providence of God—in which we may include the creation as well as the government of the world—is that permission and tolerance of evil which follows as a necessary consequence from the planting of free creatures in a state of probation. Let us never underrate this. It has its answer, but not all can see it. Those familiar with the difficulties which practically beset and bewilder no inconsiderable number even of Christian and Catholic souls to whom the world is a puzzle and a riddle, will hardly

question the importance of this difficulty, which pushes itself, if we may say so, in so many different directions, making men at one time question the justice of the decree which has loaded them with the responsibility of a choice whose issue is eternal, at another time doubt of the love which can create beings whom it foreknows shall be everlastingly miserable, or again, at another, rise up against the sentence which visits the rebellion of a weak and sorely tempted creature with a punishment so great as that which awaits the wicked in the next world. Or again, the difficulty takes the form, as we see in some of the Psalms, to quote no other example, of an inability to understand the prosperity of vice, the apparent impunity in this life of the enemies of God, and the afflictions and calamities which befall the just. Or, again, the thing which is unintelligible seems to be that God's work is so much marred and fettered in the world, that there is so little result for so great an expenditure of love, labour, and sacrifice, and that mischief is allowed to flourish even in the very home of good, and to corrupt those who would otherwise serve God in innocence and faithfulness.

Such are some of the difficulties of which we speak, and they all have their answer in the knowledge of God and of His character, His attributes, and His ways with men, and most of them are touched by the remark of St. Augustine, that God chooses rather to bring good out of evil than not to permit evil. Others, again, are met as St. Paul usually, in the first instance, meets difficulties about Providence and predestination, by a consideration of the absolute lordship and dominion of God over His creatures, whom He may place under whatever conditions He will, consistently, as whatever He wills must be consistent, with His justice and His holiness. And after this consideration of the absolute authority and ownership—so to speak—of a Creator over His creatures, there naturally follow others which are required also for difficulties

of another kind, as well as for those of which we have spoken—considerations of God's immense and boundless goodness, His tender care over His own, His mercy and long-suffering and indulgence to those who oppose themselves to Him, His ever-ready grace, His fatherly attention to prayer, and the like. Another great head of what we may call in general the mystery of God's government, contains the whole chain of His dealings with man in respect of his fall and redemption, the arrangements made for his recovery, the manner in which it is brought about, and the special laws of the new kingdom which is its organ, and through which its blessings are administered. Here we come to what in a more restricted sense may be considered as the 'mystery' of God's Kingdom—the Divine 'economy' of grace which is worked out through the Incarnation by means of an exquisite system, full of beauty, gentleness, and tenderness, the principles and many of the details of which will be found, on close inspection, to be figured in the parables. All these things are what they are in detail on account of something which may be known and reflected on concerning God, and they cannot be understood and valued unless with respect to Him, and as reflecting His goodness or holiness, or mercifulness or justice.

This is a very imperfect as well as a very general description of the sort of truths which may be conceived as forming the more substantial points in the teaching by parables—the points to which other things are subordinated, and with reference to which those other things are best to be understood. The first of all the formal parables, which is also one of those few parables which our Lord Himself has explained in detail, seems at first sight to be a description of the different ways in which the word of God—in whatever form and under whatever dispensation—is received by man. But it is commonly called the parable of the Sower,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> St. Matt. xiii. ; St. Mark iv. ; St. Luke viii.

from its first words and from its principal figure, God, Who sows His seed broadcast and with so much profusion, and seems, as has so often been remarked, in both His material and His spiritual creation, to waste so many beginnings which do not come to maturity, for the sake, if we may so speak, of the rich and multiplied beauty and fruitfulness of a few. This law, which runs through the whole of God's kingdom, as far as we know it, suggests many truths concerning Him—His magnificence and liberality, the manner in which even imperfect works, as they seem to us, manifest His glory, the dignity which His grace gives to those who co-operate with it, and the like ; while it has a clearer significance when seen working on creations of free beings, who can co-operate with that grace or not, and furnishes a silent commentary on that failure of our Lord's own particular mission of which He had lately been so mournfully complaining. The minute details of the parable, giving so vivid a picture that we almost seem to see the spot near the seashore from which every feature of the image may have been taken, are explained by our Lord of the different circumstances under which so much of the good seed of the Word of God is wasted, while only a part of it takes root in good ground ; and the careful mention of every several cause of failure reminds us of the particular and deliberate manner in which He more than once enumerated the successive stages of His own future Passion.<sup>24</sup> The next parable, known as that of the Tares or Cockle,<sup>25</sup> tells us still more about the mystery of the kingdom, for in this not only is the good seed wasted, but bad seed is actually sown, and springs

<sup>24</sup> This prophecy grows in distinctness from the date of the Confession of St. Peter, when it was first made, to that of the last approach to Jerusalem before Palm Sunday. Comp. St. Matt. xvi. 21, St. Mark viii. 31, St. Luke xi. 21 (§ 82), with St. Matt. xvii. 21, 22, St. Mark ix. 30, St. Luke ix. 44 (§ 84 ad fin.); and again with St. Matt. xx 18, 19, St. Mark x. 33, 34, St. Luke xviii. 32, 33 (§ 128).

<sup>25</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 24—30, 36—53.



up by the side of the good that is not wasted. How many of the difficulties as to God's providence may not be solved by the simple words, 'Suffer both to grow until the harvest'? And when we consider that in the spiritual kingdom of God that is possible which is contrary to the laws of the natural kingdom—that the cockle or tare may become the wheat, and the wheat may degenerate into the cockle—we have a fresh revelation of God's tender, and, to use the Scriptural expression, reverential way of dealing with us in the words, 'Lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, ye root up the wheat also together with it.'

The six parables—those of the Seed that grows secretly, of the Grain of Mustard-seed, of the Leaven, of the Hidden Treasure, the Precious Pearl, and the Draw-net—which follow those of the Sower and of the Tares, may be considered as completing, each by the addition of some special feature, the picture drawn by our Lord in His general dealings in His kingdom. God addresses Himself to His creatures, and allows them to refuse or accept Him. He tolerates His enemies until the harvest, for their sake and for the sake of those among whom they live. We have now to see certain characteristics of the work which He carries on in those who receive Him. The parable (given by St. Mark<sup>26</sup> alone) of the Seed that grows gradually, seems to picture that progress from one virtue to another which is the mark of those who belong to Him, and which accounts for the abundant thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and one hundred-fold, of which mention has been made before. But God works in a double way, by His external word and outward means of grace, and again by the inherent fertility which He imparts to good souls, and the secret influence of His own perpetual action upon each soul in particular. The earth seems to bring forth of itself after the seed has once been implanted, and the result is partly the work of the seed,

<sup>26</sup> St. Mark iv. 26—34; § 60.



partly that of the earth. The image of the grain of mustard-seed<sup>27</sup> seems to represent the outward development and magnificent growth of the work of God in the world, while that of the leaven<sup>28</sup> explains the law of its growth, which is from within, by the silent spread of the influence of grace, and the assimilation of those natural elements in the mass in which it works which are congenial to it. It need not be questioned that these parables, like many others, are historical and prophetic. But they come true in history, because they represent the principles on which God works, and these principles are ultimately the echoes and reflections of His character, His wisdom, His patience, His winning ways with His creatures—that sweetness with which He ‘ordereth all things’ of which the Scripture speaks.<sup>29</sup>

The parables of the Treasure hid in a Field, and of the Pearl of Great Price,<sup>30</sup> which come next in order, are frequently interpreted as if the principal reference were not to God but to those who seek or who find Him and His grace. This interpretation might seem at first sight to be at variance with the view which is set forth in this paper, that the dealings of God with man form the direct subject of the teaching by parables, rather than the dealings of man with God. It must be remembered, however, that no one can truly find or truly seek God without God Himself, and that, as in the reality figured by the parables which have just been mentioned, it is God Who gives to the earth or to the seed its fruitfulness, God Who gives to the hidden leaven its power of spreading and assimilating and penetrating that which it leavens, it is God Who gives to the mustard-seed the power to grow into a great tree, God Who assists in all these cases the development and the exercise of the powers which He has originally created and bestowed—so here in

<sup>27</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 31, 32; St. Mark iv. 30—32.

<sup>28</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 33.

<sup>29</sup> Wisdom viii. 1.

<sup>30</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 44—46.

the parables of the Pearl and of the Treasure the holy instinct which seeks the pearl comes from Him, and the seeming accident of finding the treasure comes from Him, as well as the grace by which he that finds either pearl or treasure understands its value, and has the courage and prudence to sell all that he has and give it for what he has found. This is a sufficient answer to the objection. But, in truth, there is another interpretation of these two parables, quite as ancient and quite as authoritative as that which has now been explained, and this interpretation applies them directly to God, Who seeks or finds human nature, the human soul, the Church, the great body of His elect, and gives Himself and all that He has in the Incarnation to make the treasure or the pearl His own. This interpretation, we may venture to say, is certainly more in keeping with the Patristic methods of understanding Scripture than the former, though it is far less in harmony with modern ideas, especially among the best Protestants, to whom the moral and more practical interpretation is apparently the only valuable interpretation. We are very far from saying that the one commentary excludes the other. The one may be founded on the other. The primary meaning of the parables may be to represent the action of God in seeking us, the one great ineffable inexplicable outpouring of love of which Creation is the first fruit, Preservation, Providence, Redemption, Sanctification, and Glorification in the possession of God by the Beatific Vision for ever, the final crown ; and the sense which speaks to us of the return of the tide of love from our small and miserable hearts towards God, a return set in motion and guided and maintained by Himself, may be not only true, though secondary, but absolutely involved and founded on and a part of the first.

There remains but one of the first glorious constellation of parables, so to speak—that in which the Kingdom of God is compared to a net cast into the sea, which gathers fish of

every kind, good and bad.<sup>31</sup> This is commonly understood of the Church, and the argument drawn from it against the maintainers of an invisible Church composed only of good people is irresistible. But, in the view which is now being discussed, the parable has a still wider meaning, and it comes in at the end of the first series of parables as answering to and in a certain sense balancing the parable of the Sower, which stands in the first place. For in that first parable we have the image of God scattering His seed at random, as it appears, and submitting to the loss of a great part of it for the sake of the return brought in by that which takes root in good soil. In the parable of the Draw-net we see that God acts thus for His own purposes, and brings both good and bad within the range of His action, in order that in the end He may select His own and reject those who are not to be His. When men cast a net into the sea, take into it whatever fish it chances to envelope, and then choose what they will have, and cast the rest away, they exercise that absolute dominion over the lower creatures which God has given them. They may be guilty of cruelty or of some other fault in their conduct to these lower creatures, but they are not guilty of injustice to them, for the lower creatures have no rights in the presence of man. So in God's dealings with us, He must always act according to the ineffable holiness of His own nature, but He is our absolute Master and Lord, as St. Paul more than once argues. We know that He is just to all, and that good and bad fishes in His draw-net are good or bad by virtue of their own will, according to the measure of their cooperation with His grace or their resistance to it. But the whole series of His dealings is for His own sake, that He may have at the end those who are His elect, and discard the rest. Thus at the beginning of this series of parables, God is represented as freely offering His grace to men who in

<sup>31</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 47—50.

various ways reject the good seed ; and now at the end of the series, the other side of the truth is put forward, and it is God Who rejects, and even punishes ; for no one is rejected by Him save through fault of his own. And this may serve to remind us of the manner in which the Apostles so frequently speak of the 'purpose,' the 'good purpose,' the 'choice' of God, as the source and root of all Christian blessings on those who have them, not excluding the action of human free will in the matter, nor, on the other hand, the desire of God that all men should be saved, which involves their having from Him all opportunities of salvation. And it is to be observed, that when our Lord gives this parable, He adds an explanation of this part of it unasked, and that explanation reaches much further than the words in the parable itself : ' So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, *and shall cast them into the furnace of fire ;* there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' <sup>32</sup> The selection to be made at the end of all things, the reward of the just and the punishment of the wicked, seem to be the points of the parable on which He particularly insists.

After the grand series of parables on which we have been commenting, we find no more of the same kind of teaching for a very considerable interval in the Gospel history. But St. Mark adds at the end of his account of these, that with many such parables He spoke to them the word, according as they were able to hear, but without parables He did not speak unto them, but apart He explained all things to His disciples' (iv. 33, 34). The next formal parable, which, as we have said already, is subsequent to these by a long interval, is addressed to His own disciples, in answer to St. Peter's question about forgiving his brother seven times or more.<sup>33</sup> It comes immediately after His

<sup>32</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 49, 50.

<sup>33</sup> St. Matt. xviii. 21—35 ; § 88.



answer to the question, Who was greater in the kingdom of heaven? which was also, therefore, a subject of private teaching to His immediate disciples. The moral of the parable of the Unmerciful Servant is of course obvious enough; but it should be particularly remembered that here again it is the character and way of dealing of God that is the chief and direct subject. The reason why St. Peter, in his suggestion that seven times might be enough to forgive a brother, fell so far short of the mind of our Lord, is to be found in forgetfulness of our position towards God as servants who have to give an account to our Master, Who deals with us as we deal with others, Who has promised to forgive us as we forgive others, and Who has even taught us to pray that our own mercifulness towards others may be the measure of His mercifulness towards us. We are inclined to stand on our own rights, and measure the offence against justice which has been committed by those who injure us; but the thought of God and of our debts to Him, and of His dealings towards us in respect of our faults, raises the question into a higher sphere altogether. And here, again, our Lord goes beyond the immediate necessity of the question in His answer, which, moreover, He enforces at the end in words which show that the central truth of the parable in His mind is the law of God's action towards us—the most absolute mercifulness and the most severe reprobation of want of mercy. 'So also shall My Heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.'

After this new feature, as we may say, added to our knowledge of God by the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, we pass on to a number of parables spoken by our Lord in that late period of His Ministry which was mainly spent in Judæa, after His leaving Galilee in the last of His three years. A great number of incidents and discourses in this part of His Life, which is chronicled



for us almost exclusively by St. Luke, and which fills up a large portion of the third Gospel, are repetitions more or less close of what had been said or done at an earlier period of His teaching—when He had confined Himself in the main to Galilee. We need not pause at present to point out how natural this is, nor how it solves completely a great number of the difficulties which have sometimes perplexed harmonists, sometimes been made use of by those who would deny the literal accuracy of the various Gospel narratives. This cycle of parables, so to call it, contains a large proportion of the most famous and well-known of all of them. It is immediately preceded by the discourse recorded by St. John in his tenth chapter as having been delivered at Jerusalem itself after the miracle of the man who had been born blind. In this discourse, although not exactly in form a parable, our Lord sets Himself before us as the Good Shepherd Who giveth His life for the sheep. The series of parables of which we are now speaking begins with that of the Good Samaritan (St. Luke x.), and it embraces that of the Friend roused at midnight (ch. xi.), the Rich Fool (ch. xii.), the discourse about vigilance, in which the figures of the watchful and negligent servants are introduced (*ib.*), the parable again of the Unfruitful Fig-tree (ch. xiii.), the repetition of the parable of the Grain of Mustard-seed (*ib.*), that of the Narrow Gate (*ib.*), that of the guest taking the lowest place (ch. xiv.), of the Great Supper (*ib.*)—which is here given without the addition of the guest without the wedding garment—of the Lost Sheep, the lost piece of money, the Prodigal Son (ch. xv.), the Unjust Steward, the Rich Man and Lazarus (ch. xvi.), the Unjust Judge, and the Publican and the Pharisee (ch. xviii.).

We must place by itself another very remarkable and significant parable, related by St. Matthew in that part of his Gospel which seems to contain what have been called

the special laws of the evangelical kingdom, such as the counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience, humility, child-like temper, perfect forgiveness of injuries, and the precept of fraternal correction. The parable of which we speak is that of the Labourers in the Vineyard—one which has given more difficulty to commentators who have not understood its occasion and purport than perhaps any other. And this leads us on to the last group of parabolic instructions, which were delivered either to the Jews in the Temple during the early days of Holy Week, or to the Apostles on Mount Olivet, at the time when the last great prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world had just been given. They are introduced by the parable of the Lord and his Servants (St. Luke xix.), delivered as our Lord was drawing nigh to Jerusalem, ‘because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately be manifested.’ The parables delivered to the Jews are those, first, of the Two Sons (St. Matt. xxi.), already alluded to, which was specially directed to the Chief Priests and Scribes, the Wicked Husbandmen (St. Matt. xxi., St. Mark xii., St. Luke xx.), and the Marriage Supper (St. Matt. xxii.) where the incident of the wedding garment is introduced. Those delivered to the disciples are the parables of the Virgins (St. Matt. xxv.), the Talents (*ib.*), and—if that is indeed to be considered a parable, and not rather a simple prophecy—that of the Sentence of the Judge on the merciful and the unmerciful (*ib.*).

The length of this rapid enumeration of the various parts of this glorious and wonderful mass of doctrine is enough to excuse us from the attempt of speaking in detail on each of the parables of which it is composed, but we may find room in our present paper to justify in regard of them the general view which we have taken of the subject of the parabolic teaching. The image of the Good Shepherd, like that of the Door, and those in later chapters of

St. John, of the Grain of Corn (ch. xii.) and of the Vine (ch. xv.), do not need any explanation beyond that which is given by our Lord Himself, and their application is obvious. They picture in the most striking manner the love of God in the Incarnation, and their details contain many precious truths as to the economy of grace. The parable of the Good Samaritan, as we commonly call it, was spoken in answer to the famous question, 'Who is my neighbour?' Touchingly beautiful as it is as a simple history, the interpretation which would be satisfied with supposing that an act of extraordinary charity on the part of a human wayfarer is here set forth as our example cannot content us, as it has never contented the Fathers of the Church. No; the Person Whom we are called upon to imitate is our own great Father, God, in the Incarnation; the 'man who fell among thieves' is a perfect theological picture of man wounded as he is by the Fall. We are thus taught that as our forgiveness to others is to be measured on the model of the forgiveness of God to us, so our charity to others is to be as close as possible an imitation of the great work of charity—the Incarnation. Thus the mind at once rises to the same great subject of God's dealings with us. So accurate is the picture that the theologians of the Church, in their teaching about the effects of the Fall, are often accustomed to draw arguments rather than mere illustrations from the details of this parable. The work of mercy which God has committed to us is a continuation of the work of mercy begun by Him, and the whole range of objects on which our mercy is to shed itself forth for their relief is figured in the parable, because the miseries of the wounded man represent accurately the physical and moral miseries which have been introduced into the world in consequence of the Fall, which miseries it was the purpose of the Incarnation to relieve, either directly or indirectly.

Again, God in His dealings with earnest prayer, which He often refrains from granting for a while, and then yields to importunity, is the subject of the parable of the Friend roused up at midnight. God, in His dealings with those who take to themselves His gifts as their own property, and set their heart upon riches, is the chief figure in the parable of the Rich Fool; for it is the forgetfulness of His Mastership, and of the suddenness with which He calls men to account for their soul, which constitutes the folly which is so soon brought to nought. God's ways of dealing with His servants, the suddenness of His coming, as if to try their fidelity, the immense rewards which He is ready to bestow on the vigilant—'He will gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and, passing by, will minister unto them;' and 'Verily, I say to you, He will set him over all that He possesseth;'—and, on the other hand, the severe but carefully-measured justice with which He will punish negligence—these are the features added to our theology by the parable about the servants. God's providential patience with communities and single persons, especially, of course, His patience with the Jewish people, is the subject of the parable of the Fig-tree. In that of the Narrow Gate (St. Luke xiii.), which is not, however, formally a parable, the same image is, to a certain extent, supplemented by the description, which occupies almost the whole passage, of the rejection of those who are not able to enter in.<sup>34</sup> This is in reality

<sup>34</sup> 'But when the Master of the House shall be gone in and shall shut the door, you shall begin to stand without and knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us. And He answering shall say to you, I know you not whence you are. Then you shall begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets. And He shall say to you, I know you not whence you are, depart from Me all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrown out' (St. Luke xiii. 25—28).

a prophecy. The parable, as it is called, about those invited to supper, who are exhorted to take the lowest place, is at first sight a puzzle on two accounts. The truth that is set forth appears to be set forth without any image at all, and the motive suggested for taking the lowest place is not the noblest motive. But this, again, is in reality a parable which sets forth the dealings and the character of God, Who always exalts those who humble themselves, and humbles those who exalt themselves. The same truth lies behind the parable (which also may be a simple anecdote, and no figure) of the Pharisee and the Publican (St. Luke xviii.), as in that also which immediately precedes it, that of the Unjust Judge, we have another repetition of the truth that God is pleased to allow Himself to be done violence to by importunate prayer. There is no real comparison, of course, between the unjust judge and God; but our Lord argues *à fortiori*—‘And will not God revenge His elect, who cry to Him day and night?’<sup>35</sup> We need hardly draw out the teaching concerning God contained in such parables as that of the Great Supper, of which it is surely not an adequate account to say that it is meant to illustrate the truth that men refuse the offers of God on account of their love for earthly goods. The manner in which the supper is supplied with guests, and the stern rejection of those who have once refused, ‘I say unto you that not one of those men that were invited shall taste of My Supper,’ is a picture of that characteristic of

<sup>35</sup> It should, however, be noted that there is something special in the teaching here, which distinguishes it from such parables, for instance, as that of the importunate friend at midnight. The prayer here is distinctly for vengeance, and the passage should be compared to that about the cry of the ‘souls under the altar of those that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held’ (Apoc. vi. 9—11). This part of St. Luke’s Gospel is probably drawn from materials collected by him while St. Paul was in prison at Cæsarea for two years (Acts xxiv.), at a time when the Christians were groaning under persecution. This may help to explain v. 8.



God celebrated by our Blessed Lady, *Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes*, of the principle which has prevailed in His kingdom ever since the Angels fell and men were called to fill their places.

Of this cycle of parables which we have mentioned as delivered chiefly in Judæa not long before our Lord's last approach to Jerusalem, there remain a few of the more celebrated to be illustrated by what we suppose to be the general view and aim of our Lord in His teaching of this kind. There are the three great parables in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, the combined meaning of which is too obviously to our purpose to need more than simple mention—the parable of the Lost Sheep, of the Lost Piece of Silver, and of the Prodigal Son. The unity of purpose in this wonderful chain of parables is manifest from the ending of the last, if from nothing else; for at the beginning of the parable of the Lost Sheep we are told of the murmuring of the Scribes and Pharisees at our Lord's condescension to sinners, and at the end of the parable of the Prodigal we have the picture of the elder brother, so exactly answering to the conduct of those whose murmuring gave occasion to the whole discourse. It is useful to have so certain an instance of unity of purpose in different parables, because we learn from this that it is a characteristic of this mode of teaching that various truths concerning the same subject are more naturally told in different parables than in one, while, at the same time, a parable may be made to develope, as it were, a second part, the subject of which is to illustrate a new truth. The three together give us a complete history of God's action towards sinners in tolerating them awhile, in not refusing them many good things to which they have, in an improper sense, a natural right, in letting the will of His creatures go its own way, in anxiously seeking them, whether in His own Home, the Church, or outside

the fold, in welcoming them back, and making His Angels rejoice with Him over their recovery. It shows, if we may so say, how full our Lord's loving Heart was of the dealings of God to man, that He should have been at the pains to draw out so elaborately the full picture of those dealings on occasion of a simple murmuring against His own condescension, and it is remarkable how the strain of condescension is carried on even to the end, where the elder son is rebuked only in the gentlest way by the remonstrance and almost the apology of his father. ✓

The two parables that follow—those, namely, of the Unjust Steward, in the sixteenth chapter of St. Luke, and of the Rich Glutton and Lazarus, in the same chapter—are of that secondary class in point of form of which we have already noticed some instances. There is no actual representation of one thing by another, nor is there any declaration that the kingdom of heaven is like this or that. Both of them might be true stories. But they are commonly reckoned among the parables, and belong to the same class of teaching with the rest. And here, too, we might contend that the principal object throughout is to set forth the dealings of God with man, instead of man's own way of acting. At this time of His teaching our Lord was particularly occupied in denouncing avarice and an undue love of earthly riches. The first parable, that of the Steward, teaches the true use of these riches; but the lesson is enforced by two truths which stand out from the narrative, the one that God will exact a strict account of the stewardship of every one; the other that riches rightly used in alms-deeds are taken in satisfaction for sin, and purchase pardon. The same reference to the laws of God's kingdom concludes the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, in which the veil that hides the unseen world is lifted up, and two great principles of the providential order are put forward in the words,

first, 'Remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things;' and then, 'If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead'—which are full, moreover, of actual prophetic meaning.

The great parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard would require a long essay to itself to draw all its significance. We may, however, remark that its difficulties will vanish to a great extent if it is considered in the light of the context, and especially in the view which is here maintained that the laws of the Divine government of the world, and especially in the Church, form the main subject of the parabolic teaching. It was just after the memorable case of the rich young man who had come to our Lord to ask what he must do to gain eternal life, and had been offered the highest and noblest of vocations, 'If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me.'<sup>36</sup> Just before, too, our Lord had set forth another counsel of perfection, that of absolute chastity, and had said pointedly, 'All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given. He that can take, let him take it.' And then St. Peter had asked his famous question, 'Behold, we have left all things and followed Thee, what therefore shall we have?' Our Lord first promised to them the special reward of the Apostolical office, and then added the hundred-fold and life everlasting for all those who left what they had to leave for Him. 'And many that are first shall be last, and the last first.' The parable which follows is evidently a commentary on these last words, which are repeated at its close, after the answer of the householder to the labourers who had entered first, and who had complained of the reward given to the others. 'Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good? So shall

<sup>36</sup> St. Matt. xix. 16, seq.

the first be last, and the last first. For many are called, but few chosen.'

These simple considerations go far towards explaining the main drift of this parable. Our Lord's teaching at this time, mainly addressed to His disciples only, turned upon the difference of vocations in the kingdom of God. There are some to whom counsels of perfection are addressed, some who cannot 'take' them. There are some who are not called to leave all and follow Christ in the closest way, and some who are called to that. St. Peter's question had elicited from our Lord a declaration of the surpassing reward which awaits those who have high vocations and follow them faithfully. It may be said that the whole system of formal states of perfection in the Church is founded upon the doctrine here laid down. That doctrine implies that God, Who is just and bountiful to all, yet chooses whom He will for the higher callings in His kingdom. He is the Father of all, the Lover of all souls ; but there are those whom He calls to higher privileges and more glorious states in this world and in the next than others. But yet the masterful freedom of God in His choice and in the distribution of His gifts goes still further yet. The rewards of the next world do not necessarily correspond to the outward callings in this. There are first who are last, there are last who are first. Those who are called to states of perfection, or, again, to conspicuous positions in the visible Church, or to Apostolical labours and duties, are not of necessity either the only chosen ones of God or His dearest souls. Notwithstanding the pre-eminence of such states, the really highest places in heaven are for the saints, those who are truly nearest to God in this world and in the next ; and the saints are to be found in all vocations and states of life—married or single, secular or religious, princes, warriors, as well as priests, rich as well as poor, young as well as old, not according to the quality of their outward state,



but according to the intensity and richness of their inward grace and the faithfulness of their cooperation with it. God may put the highest graces in the lowest vocations, He may raise to consummate perfection in a few weeks or months as in a long course of years. This free munificence and absolute choice of God is the main lesson concerning Him in the parable before us. It is a law of His action, as truly as the law of exalting the humble and resisting the proud. To all He can say, 'I do thee no wrong;' I give thee what thou hast deserved and far more. 'I will give unto this last even as unto thee. It is not lawful for Me to do what I will?' Surely we may venture to say that without this lesson the doctrine as to counsels and states of perfection would have been even incomplete. And the law of God's free choice in the disposal of His gifts is the same, in whatever of its operations we seek the more particular interpretation of the details of the parable. We find no fault with those who understand the callings at the several hours of the historical dealings of God with the Jews or Gentiles, for it is important to bear in mind the truth that He acts towards nations and communities as wholes, and in great measure on the same principle as with single persons. In any case, the Divine law on which the parable turns is that expressed in the words already quoted, 'Is it not lawful for Me to do what I like?' Glory and reward always correspond grace and virtue; but grace and virtue are gifts of God, and they are not distributed by Him in any servile obedience to the state or condition in which His Providence has placed us. Nor do we find fault with another usual interpretation, according to which the envious selfishness of the murmurers is the vice against which we are warned. Rather it is clear from all history—from the history of the conduct of the Chief Priests and Pharisees to our Lord down to the most recent experience—that no temptation is more dangerous to those who are favoured by high vocations in



God's external kingdom, as ecclesiastics, or dignitaries, or workers in His vineyard, than the temptation to jealousy or envy—the peculiar temptation of those whose states secure them from grosser falls. Such faults are often obvious to all but those who fall under them, as the envious motives of our Lord's enemies were obvious to the Roman Governor. 'For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him.'<sup>37</sup>

Another great doctrine about God is contained in the parable of the Lord and his servants, which may have been meant to steady the excited expectations of our Lord's followers as to some immediate external triumph, without serious long-continued conscientious work for their Master. It is another manifestation of the mastery and dominion of God that is contained both in the parable generally, and especially in the treatment of the negligent over-cautious servant, who thinks he does enough for his lord when he brings him back what he has received from him—'Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have laid up in a napkin.' Yes, there is a sense in which it is true of God—'Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow;' that is, He requires work and fruitfulness, the sweat of the brow and the toil of the brain, and the multiplied pounds—'His own "with usury."' But then it is He that gives the power as well as the occasion to work; it is He that guides the labouring hand and gives life and energy to the teeming brain. The multiplication of the pounds is His work, the success of the labour is His, and the reward of the labour is ours. 'A necessity lieth upon me,'<sup>38</sup> says St. Paul, 'for woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel!' And our Lord had already insisted upon this truth to the Apostles, when He had told them in one of those parables of the secondary kind, of which we have omitted special notice,<sup>39</sup> how men

<sup>37</sup> St. Matt. xxvii. 18.

<sup>38</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 16.

<sup>39</sup> St. Luke xvii. 7.

behave to their servants, even after they have laboured all the day, making them when they return home first bring their masters' dinner and wait upon them, and not till after that take their own refreshment. 'Doth he thank that servant for doing those things which he commanded him? I think not. So you also, when you shall have done all those things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which we ought to do.' So frequently does our Lord insist upon that entire dominion of God over us, which it is so easy and so pernicious to forget.

We thus come to the parables of the Holy Week. That of the Two Sons has already been spoken of.<sup>40</sup> That of the Vineyard and Husbandmen, which immediately follows, is applied by our Lord Himself to the fearful rejection and chastisement of the Jews for their continued abuse of God's graces, and it contains, moreover, the doctrine of God's long-continued patience and of the public vengeance with which He at last visits those who have persecuted His messengers—the guilt of which persecution, in the case of the Jews, was to be so awfully enhanced by their murder of His Son. And we must observe the force with which our Lord<sup>41</sup> insists on the Scriptural principle, 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner'—quoting words which were afterwards used by St. Peter and St. Paul. In the same way the parable which stands next in order—the last which our Lord addressed to any but His own disciples—that of the Marriage Feast, is a picture of the law of Divine action towards men. It repeats in a more pointed manner the lesson as to God's dealings contained in the former parable of the Great Supper, but it varies the details in a manner that gives it

<sup>40</sup> St. Matt. xxi. 28—32.

<sup>41</sup> St. Matt. xxi. 42; St. Mark xii. 10, 11; St. Luke xx. 17, 18  
*Vita Vitæ*, § 136.

a prophetic reference to the same subject as the last. Here it is not merely, 'I pray thee hold me excused,' but they 'laid hands on His servants, and having treated them contumeliously, put them to death. And when the King heard of it, He was angry, and sending His armies, He destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city.'<sup>42</sup> Then, again, another parable is made to attach itself to the latter part of the original, that of the guest without a wedding garment. And here again we have another feature in the image of God as He reveals Himself in His dealings to us—His severe purity that will not allow of anything unclean or common in His sight, and that jealous punishment of presumption which is as characteristic of Him as His immense mercifulness, condescension, and bounty.

Again, deeply significant as are the last of all the parables, those of the Ten Virgins, the Talents, and—if that be one—the image of the Last Judgment, with which the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew concludes, the doctrine which they teach us about God is so unmistakeable as to make it unnecessary for us here to dwell upon them at any length. It is the suddenness with which He will call us to account, or the severity with which He will visit simple negligence, or again, the reward of those who are found ready, and the abundant recompense of those who have laboured faithfully, or the peculiar love with which He regards works of mercy, which seem to be, in a sense, more dear to Him than the acts of other virtues for a particular reason connected with the great subject on which we have been all along engaged—that of His providential government of the world. For, let it be asked, as it often is asked, with misgivings and doubts, which, under the present state of society, have taken deep hold of many a heart that would willingly find no difficulty in the doctrine of Providence—let it be asked how has God—Who feeds the ravens who call upon Him,

<sup>42</sup> St. Matt. xxii. 6, 7.

clothes the lilies of the field, and lets not a sparrow fall to the ground without His knowledge and permission—how has He provided for the wants of those who are of more value than many sparrows, the hungry, the naked, the poor, orphans, widows, the sick, the afflicted of every class? The answer is surely this, that apart from special interpositions of His power, He has provided for them by the Christian charity of their brethren. He has left them to us, and He has made us the ministers charged with the execution of His behests of mercy to them, as He has charged earth and air and dew and rain and sea, the teeming ground, the fostering ray, the genial shower, fruits and trees and herbs and flowers, and all the resources of nature, to provide for the wants of His lower creatures. The machinery of nature does not fail—well would it be if our charity and mercy to our fellow-men failed as little!

Mercy, then, is the provision which God, the Author and Ruler of society, and especially of Christian society, has made for human miseries, manifold as they are; and this great scene of the Judgment Day thus answers in a remarkable manner to the parable of the Good Samaritan. Thus also it appropriately closes the long series of the parables. We can see how it is that in this great unfolding of the ways of God to mankind in His Providence, the closing scene of the whole history should be made by our Blessed Lord to turn upon the judgment of men as to this point—how they have fulfilled their duty as to the administration of that service of mercy which is their peculiar part, a part which God has so much at heart, in the great order of His kingdom. Doubtless He repairs in a thousand ways the effects of their coldness and negligence; doubtless He crowns a thousand virtues and punishes a thousand faults, beside the virtue of mercy and the fault of unmercifulness. But it is a law of His kingdom, a law set forth in the Old Testament as well as in the New, that ‘He gave to every



one commandment concerning his neighbour,'<sup>43</sup> and the first sin committed against human society was that of him who asked, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'<sup>44</sup> No wonder, then, that the last of our Lord's revelations concerning His Father in publicly judging the world through Him, should be that which tells us how strictly this law will be vindicated, how much will depend on our practical remembrance or practical forgetfulness of His own most tender words—'Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, ye did it unto Me'—to Me, your Brother and your Redeemer, the Beginning and Author of your regenerate supernatural life; to Me, your God, your Governor, your Provider and Preserver, Who have committed to you so large a share of the Providence on which your brethren depend.

We may add a single word as to the general principle of the interpretation of the details of the parables, as distinct from the purpose which we may assign to each of setting forth some great law of God's action in the government of His kingdom. The examples which we possess of the interpretation of parables by our Blessed Lord Himself, in the case of the parable of the Sower and that of the Tares or Cockle, certainly seem to favour the belief that almost every feature of the comparisons by which Divine truths are thus represented has its counterpart in reality. At the same time this principle might probably be urged too far. In the second of these two great parables, for instance, one portion is left by our Lord unapplied, for there is nothing in His explanation which corresponds to the servants who go to the Master of the Field, and ask Him how it comes that there is a mixture of bad seed with good, to whom He gives the significant answer, 'Let both grow until the harvest.' We need only observe, that we have been occupied for the present with the more important point

<sup>43</sup> Ecclus. xvii. 12.

<sup>44</sup> Gen. iv. 19.



of ascertaining some general principle which may enable us to look at once to the great truths which are the main subject of the parabolic teaching, and that when that is once established, if it can be established with any accuracy, it must of necessity furnish a most valuable key to unlock the difficulties of the details of the picture in each case, instead of in any way excluding the idea of their deep and varied significance.

N.B. [This Essay was published a few years ago in a separate form.]

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CORRIGENDA, VOL. I.

P. 24. The Greek quotation in the note is uncorrected. Read—  
*εἰς ἃ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι παρακύψαι.*

P. 44, note. The references should be—Osee xi. 1 ; Jerem. xxxi. 15.

P. 96, line 20, *for* 'I also worketh,' *read* 'I also work.'

P. 96, line 28, *for* 'gave them to work,' *read* 'gave Him to work.'





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